THE KING KONG ARCHIVES

ROM: 1996 & 2005 SCRIPTS

VIEW THE 1996 SCRIPT

VIEW THE 2005 SCRIPT

KING KONG

Screenplay by

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From an idea conceived by

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I.C.M

EXT. SKIES OVER FRANCE 1917 - DAY

CAMERA drifts towards a large puffy cloud floating 6000ft above the French countryside ...

... a roar of engines - sounding like angry buzzing bees - and three ... six ... NINE SOPWITH CAMEL FIGHTER PLANES emerge from the cloud, flying in tight formation. These are frail looking, but deadly single seat BIPLANES, each armed with twin Vickers machine guns. The height of 1917 aircraft design, built for the sole purpose of blasting German planes out of the skies.

SUPER: "FRANCE 1917"

JACK DRISCOLL and his buddy, MATT HAMMON are flying two of the CAMELS at the rear of the formation.

MATT is nervously CHEWING GUM ... he tries to BLOW a BUBBLE, but the slipstream flattens it against his GOGGLES! JACK laughs.

Sudden MACHINE GUN FIRE ... The SQUADRON LEADER has fired his guns to attract the attention of all his pilots. He gestures down ...

JACK looks down ... 3 large GERMAN BOMBERS, esorted by 6 sleek ALBATROS fighters are heading towards Allied lines, about 1000 feet below.

With a wave of the SQUADRON LEADER'S arm, the NINE CAMELS peel away towards the GERMAN PLANES. The fun is over for JACK and MATT as they grimly steer their planes into the steep dive ... WOOD CREAKS, WIRE WHISTLES as the CAMELS shudder against the wind resistance. Wings sometimes crumple like matchwood in dives as steep as this. JACK squints as he lines up an ALBATROS in his gunsights. The Germans have not spotted the FAST APPROACHING CAMELS ...

The Camel Pilots OPEN FIRE almost simultaneously - 18 MACHINE GUNS send yellow TRACER BULLETS ripping into the German planes. Within seconds, 3 ALBATROS are destroyed: One spins away in flames, another literally collapses under a hail of bullets and the third collides with one of the BOMBERS, causing both planes to tumble out of the sky.

It's a turkey shoot as the CAMELS fly through the German formation, turning sharply to attack again before the enemy pilots can recover.

TRACER FIRE rips into JACK'S PLANE ... He SPINS AROUND, confronted with a TERRIFYING SIGHT!

The 24 gaudily painted FOKKER TRIPLANES of VON RICHTOFEN'S FLYING CIRCUS are diving down towards them. The hunters have just become THE HUNTED! Before JACK can react, the TRIPLANES swoop into the dogfight ...

The sky is suddenly filled with nearly 50 planes wheeling around in a desperate life and death struggle. From a distance they look like a swarm of angry bees against a spectacular backdrop of cumulous cloud rising in towering columns.

Close in, it's stomach churning, noisy and violent as terrified pilots throw their planes around the sky in a frenzied attempt to blast bullets into each other. You may have seen movie dogfights before, but you haven't seen one like this!

JACK wrenches the control stick, sending his Camel through a series of TIGHT TURNS, wincing as BOILING CASTOR OIL from the rotary engine SLAPS INTO HIS FACE ... there are so many planes that collision is as threatening as the deadly TRACER FIRE that zips in all directions.

CRRUMMPP! MATT'S plane collides with a crippled TRIPLANE and goes into an immediate spin. MATT tries to regain control ... his right hand wingtip is in tatters.

JACK sees his buddy going down and dives after him, blasting at a COUPLE OF TRIPLANES that are closing in on the crippled CAMEL.

MATT uses all his strength to haul the control stick back and pull out of the dive. He is dangerously close to the ground - the shell-torn landscape of NO MAN'S LAND. MATT levels as he loses his last few feet of height and SMASHES INTO THE GROUND.

EXT. NO MAN'S LAND - DAY

JACK carefully guides HIS PLANE between shell holes and MANAGES a BUMPY, but SUCCESSFUL LANDING!

JACK rips off his HELMET & GOGGLES - he is 19 years old. He leaps out of his plane as BULLETS whizz all around.

MATT'S PLANE is a BROKEN PILE OF SPLINTERED WOOD and CANVAS at the bottom of a deep BOMB CRATER in an ABANDONED TRENCH SYSTEM.

JACK dives into the CRATER ...

JACK
(distraught)
Matt???

MATT GROANS! He is alive, but TRAPPED DEEP in the TANGLE OF WRECKAGE.

MATT
(groaning)
My leg! Jesus Jack! I've broken my leg!

JACK tries to pull BITS of the SMASHED PLANE away, but the whole thing is an impossible tangle of wood and wire.

JACK
Hang on, Matt! I won't be long!

MATT
I'm scared, Jack! ...I don't wanna die.

JACK
(reassuring)
Hey! Trust me!

JACK races into the ABANDONED TRENCHES - a nightmare of MUD, EQUIPMENT and CORPSES. He finds a pair of WIRECUTTERS ... pulls a SHOVEL out from under a CORPSE ... and races back towards the WRECKAGE.

PUSH IN: as JACK suddenly FREEZES in HORROR ... 6 British TANKS are advancing across No Man's Land - one of them heading STRAIGHT FOR THE WRECKAGE!!!

JACK desperately HACKS and CHOPS at the WRECKAGE with the SHOVEL ... it ain't working ...

MATT
(worried)
Jack? What's happening?

JACK
(panicked)
It's ok! You'll be ok!

15 feet above JACK, on the LIP of the CRATER, the TANK appears, inching slowly forward ... EARTH CRUMBLES beneath it. JACK waves his arms frantically.

JACK
(yelling)
No!!!

The British MkIV TANK of 1917 was a roaring metal slug with virtually no driver visibility. The TANK is about to TIP FORWARD, down the side of the CRATER - right onto top of the WRECKAGE ... and MATT. He cannot see the TANK.

MATT
(panicked scream)
What's happening, Jack? Jack!

The TANK TIPS FOWARD ...

JACK
(screaming)
No!!!

MATT and the WRECKAGE disappear under TONS of CRAWLING METAL ... JACK SCREAMS uncontrollably as the TANK RUMBLES PAST ...

IMAGE SLOWS DOWN ... turns to GRAINY BLACK & WHITE: JACK sinks to his knees, CRYING TEARS of GRIEF ...

TILT UP: to the SKY ... SEVERAL DOGFIGHTING AEROPLANES are circling above JACK. His O.S SCREAMS dissolve into BIRD CALLS as ...

EXT. SUMATRAN HARBOR - DAY

... the AEROPLANES transform into BEAUTIFUL TROPICAL BIRDS!

TILT DOWN ... to REVEAL a LARGE TRAMP STEAMER "The VENTURE" gliding towards SUMATRAN DOCKS - a crowded series of wharves where NATIVE OUTRIGGERS and FISHING BOATS compete for space with rusting COASTAL TRADERS.

Amongst the junk that litters the harbor: an old AVRO SEAPLANE - beached on the muddy banks ... canvas ripped, wings broken.

WIDE ... The HARBOR is nestled in a pretty bay surrounded by RUGGED MOUNTAINS.

SUPER: "16 YEARS LATER"

SUPER: "SUMATRA 1933"

EXT. SUMATRAN DOCKS - DAY

A Tin-Pot SUMATRAN BAND strikes up an out-of-tune version of "DIXIE" as CARL DENHAM strides down the VENTURE'S GANGPLANK.

DENHAM is in his 40's ... energetic, charming, ambitious - a film maker in the old showman tradition.

Mr SELAMAT GINTING, the local DISTRICT COMMISSIONER, steps forward thrusting a GARLAND OF FLOWERS over DENHAM'S HEAD. DENHAM pumps MR GINTING'S HAND.

DENHAM
Hi, Carl Denham ... How's it going? Wonderful to be here!

MR GINTING
(carefully practiced)
We welcome you, Mr Denham! We celebrate the bonding of our cultures ... the peoples of Sumatra unite in friendship with the peoples of Hollywoodland!

DENHAM
(distracted)
Great ... great ... Where's the transport?

MR GINTING
Transport arranged for tomorrow morning. Today we have welcome and songs at our new school!

DENHAM
No, no - you don't get it ... I'm on a schedule here. I'm leaving tomorrow - I gotta shoot these archeological ruins like today! I gotta get six people and a shit-load of camera equipment into the mountains!

SOUND OF LOUD TRUCK HORN ... A TRUCK, fully laden with SAWN LOGS is trying to drive onto the NARROW WHARF.

JACK DRISCOLL leans out of the CAB, yelling at DENHAM and MR GINTING. JACK is now in his early 30's ... He has not lost his boyish looks, but years of tropical sun has darkened his skin.

JACK
(yelling)
Are you getting out of the way, or am I gonna have to tune your violins?

He edges the TRUCK towards the BAND ... "DIXIE" falls apart as the BAND MEMBERS grab their instruments and SCATTER.

DENHAM watches the TRUCK - his eyes light up..

CUT TO:

EXT. SUMATRAN VILLAGE - DAY

JACK'S TRUCK rumbles through a DUSTY VILLAGE, heading towards the MOUNTAINS. 2 of DENHAM'S CREW are perched on the back of the TRUCK amid BOXES OF CAMERA GEAR.

INT. TRUCK CAB - DAY

JACK is driving, with DENHAM sitting beside him.

JACK
Last motion picture I saw was in 1916 ... Charlie Chaplin.

JACK CHUCKLES at the memory ...

JACK (CONT'D)
Is that guy still making pictures? He was real funny!

DENHAM
Yeah, yeah ... but public taste has changed. People want action, thrills - real life adventure .. like my last picture: "Mud Men of the Moodabe Delta".

JACK
(dryly)
What's that? A romantic comedy?

DENHAM
(terse)
I make documentaries ... a "Carl Denham Picture" means a thrilling journey into exotic worlds the public can only dream about!

JACK raises his eyebrows.

DENHAM (CONT'D)
So, tell me Jack ... have you been up to the site of this lost city?

JACK shakes his head.

JACK
Can't say I have ... I've got a thousand acres of rain forest to clear before the monsoon hits.

EXT. RAVAGED HILLSIDE - DAY

The TRUCK winds up a NARROW MOUNTAIN ROAD through barren hillsides of RAVAGED FOREST.

INT. TRUCK CAB - DAY

DENHAM whistles ...

DENHAM
You boys have been busy!

DENHAM suddenly REACTS WITH ALARM!

DENHAM (CONT'D)
(alarmed)
Whoa!! Body on the road!

The TRUCK drives towards a DARK FIGURE sprawled on the ROAD AHEAD, next to a FELLED TREE.

JACK shakes his head.

JACK
(disinterested)
Orangutang ... Goddamn monkeys - they piss me off.

CUT TO:

EXT. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE - DAY

A UNION JACK flutters from a makeshift flagpole above a GROUP OF TENTS ... on the SHORE of a SMALL LAKE, nestled in a BASIN-like valley. 8 BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGISTS are busy, working amongst the FALLEN STONE RUINS of an ancient civilization ...

We follow an attractive young English woman in her early 20's as she weaves her way through the RUINS ... ANN DARROW wears baggy khaki trousers and a cotton shirt. Her LONG BLONDE hair is tied back in a pony tail.

LORD DARROW (O.S)
(yelling)
Ann!

LORD LINWOOD DARROW is supervising the packing of ARTIFACTS into CRATES labelled "BRITISH MUSEUM". He is in his late 70's, but still cuts a dashing figure. He TOSSES ANN a COIL OF ELECTRICAL WIRE.

LORD DARROW (CONT'D)
Get this down to Bayliss ... he's setting the charges.

ANN takes the COIL of WIRE and hurries through the RUINS.

The RUINS are dotted around areas of the LAKE SHORE - which mostly rises steeply out of the water as rocky cliffs. The LAKE is a little smaller than a football field ... a HIGH WATERFALL empties out of the valley through a narrow opening in the cliffs.

EXT. WATERFALL - DAY

STEVE BAYLISS - A BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGIST - is crouched below the WATERFALL, sweat rolling from his brow. He is gingerly placing STICKS OF GELIGNITE into ROCK CAVITIES.

He senses ANN out of the corner of his eye ...

STEVE
(quietly)
At this point you don't want to sneeze or fart.

ANN hands STEVE the COIL OF WIRE ...

ANN
(wryly)
Controlled explosions only, please Steve.

STEVE wires a DETONATOR into the GELIGNITE ... he suddenly FREEZES as JACK'S TRUCK RUMBLES close-by, heading towards the CAMP.

STEVE
(tense)
Who the hell is that?

ANN
(puzzled)
It's a logging truck ...

STEVE
For Christsake, shut that road down!

STEVE starts unrolling the wire ...

STEVE (CONT'D)
You've got three minutes ...

EXT. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE - DAY

DENHAM hops out of the cab as his CREW unload the CAMERA GEAR. HERB - the CAMERAMAN - is middle-aged, steadfastly loyal, and walks with a pronounced LIMP. JOSH - his ASSISTANT - is 17 years old.

DENHAM hands JACK a FEW BANK NOTES ...

DENHAM
Thanks, Buddy!

LORD DARROW approaches.

LORD DARROW
Mr Denham? You're just in time ... I suggest you set your cameras up on the bluff over there.

LORD DARROW points to a ROCKY OUT-CROP overlooking the LAKE.

DENHAM shakes LORD DARROW'S HAND warmly.

DENHAM
Your Lordship ... it's an honor to meet you, sir. I'm a great fan of all your discoveries! I really want to work closely with you on this incredible find.

JACK is driving away from the CAMP ... heading back down the road.

EXT. CAMP ROAD - DAY

JACK FROWNS as ANN comes running up the ROAD towards him.

ANN
(urgent)
Stop! This road's closed!

JACK stops ... leans out.

JACK
I just drove up here two minutes ago!

ANN
(urgent)
Reverse up the hill ... Quick! There's going to be a -

KAABOOM!!! The GROUND TREMBLES, throwing ANN against the side of JACK'S TRUCK.

EXT. LAKE SIDE - DAY

DENHAM'S jaw drops as he watches a COLUMN OF WATER rise hundreds of feet into the air!

DENHAM
Holy shit!

The NARROW LIP at the mouth of the LAKE BASIN CRUMBLES AWAY, releasing a TORRENT of WATER into the LOWER VALLEY.

HERB is FILMING.

LORD DARROW'S eyes BLAZE IN TRIUMPH!

EXT. CAMP ROAD - DAY

ROCKY DEBRIS and WATER rains down on JACK'S TRUCK as he leaps out and hurries over to ANN ... she lies DAZED on the road.

JACK
Are you ok?

Before JACK can reach ANN, she staggers to her feet and RUNS towards the CAMP!

JACK
(yelling)
Hey!

JACK watches her go ... INTRIGUED. He shakes his head and turns back to his TRUCK.

EXT. LAKE SIDE - DAY

LORD DARROW is AWESTRUCK as he watches the WATER LEVEL of the LAKE rapidly drop ...

ANN arrives at his side ... takes hold of his arm.

ANN
(excited)
Father!

An AMAZING SIGHT: ALGAE covered TEMPLES and STATUES are slowly revealed by the receeding water level!

The LAKE was concealing an incredible DROWNED TEMPLE ... An ancient wonder built into the CLIFF FACES of a DEEP VALLEY!

LORD DARROW is TREMBLING ... His eyes WATER UP.

LORD DARROW
(emotional)
My God ... it's the temple.

CUT TO:

EXT. TEMPLE - DAY

LOOKING UP FROM the BOTTOM of the LAKE ... now COMPLETELY DRAINED.

ELABORATE STATUES and BUILDINGS rise into the air. The STYLE is unusual ... As advanced as the INCAS or EGYPTIANS, but with flowing GAUDI-like lines. A strange mix of STONE, BRONZE and LARGE BONES is incorporated into the architecture.

Everything is COATED with SLIMEY ALGAE and long tendrils of LAKE WEED.

EXT. OLD LAKE SHORE - DAY

DENHAM turns away from the BASIN, eyes shining with greed.

DENHAM
Jesus Christ! This is going to make us a fortune!

HERB grins as he PANS HIS CAMERA across the spectacular VISTA.

HERB
Looks pretty good to me, Mr Denham!

The CLIFF WALLS rise nearly vertically ... 100 feet towards the old lake surface. A VERY STEEP STONE STAIRCASE provides ACCESS to the interior basin.

LORD DARROW, ANN, STEVE, SEVERAL ARCHAEOLOGISTS and SUMATRAN LABORERS carefully descend down this STAIRCASE, supported by ROPES. DENHAM follows, a few feet behind ... JOSH helps HERB carry the CAMERA GEAR.

... They look like ANTS against the vast MONUMENTS.

INT. TEMPLE CAVERN - DAY

WIDE SHOT ... From the inside of a HUGE DOORWAY. The TINY FIGURES are SILHOUETTED against the light. Long TENTRILS OF WEED hang down, still dripping.

CLOSER ON: LORD DARROW ... SLOW PUSH IN towards his AWESTRUCK FACE as he looks PAST CAMERA. The OTHERS group behind him, EQUALLY AMAZED!

ANGLE ON: The INTERIOR of a CATHEDRAL-LIKE TEMPLE, carved into the CLIFF FACE at the bottom of the BASIN.

In the center of the TEMPLE is a large 20 ft STATUE OF A FRIGHTENING APE-LIKE ANIMAL ... FACE SNARLING with fearsome rage ... bristled fur, taloned hands. It is positioned atop a bed of REAL HUMAN SKULLS, intergrated into the STATUE. The base of the STATUE is inscribed with HIEROGLYPHIC-like ART and DIAGRAMS.

The GROUP are STUNNED INTO SILENCE ... until LORD DARROW speaks, his voice ECHOED in the cavernous chamber.

LORD DARROW
(whisper)
Good God ... I don't believe it.

LOW ANGLE ... LORD DARROW turns to face the OTHERS, the STATUE looming in the frame behind him. The old man's face shines with OBSESSIVE INTENSITY.

LORD DARROW (CONT'D)
(creepy)
Behold ... the Beast God ... KONG!

SUMATRAN LABORERS instinctively BACK AWAY.

SUMATRAN LABORER
(terrified)
Kong ...

LORD DARROW
(creepy)
Worshipped by a savage race ... "Talak e a Kong" The Cult of the Beast God was systematically hunted down and killed by the Hindu. No likeness of Kong was allowed to survive. All trace of the culture was eliminated ... as if it had never existed.

SILENCE ...

DENHAM
(loudly)
That's great your Lordship! Now, if you wouldn't mind - just repeat that and we'll get it from another angle ... exact same words, please!

ANN spins around ...

DENHAM
What? What did I say?

She points past DENHAM'S shoulder.

ANN
The laborers!

THE OTHERS look up in time to see the SUMATRAN LABORERS scurrying up the staircase as fast as they can.

LORD DARROW turns to an ARCHAEOLOGIST ...

LORD DARROW
(urgent)
Dougie! Send a wire to the Home Office. They need to contact the Sumatran Goverment as soon as possible ... this thing could get out of hand. Quick now!

CUT TO:

EXT. TEMPLE - NIGHT

The TEMPLE BASIN is lit by ELECTRICAL LIGHTS, powered by a distant generator. The SPARSE LIGHTING and DRAMATIC SHADOWS invest the site with an EERIE GRANDEUR.

TRUCKS are being driven directly into the BASIN, via the NARROW FISSURE created by the explosion.

ARCHEOLOGISTS are working quickly, MEASURING, PHOTOGRAPHING, SKETCHING. LORD DARROW directs operations with a wave of his WALKING STICK.

DENHAM, HERB and his CREW are busy FILMING.

DOUGIE suddenly appears from inside the TEMPLE ... he GESTURES to LORD DARROW, clearly not wanting to ATTRACT ATTENTION ... LORD DARROW hurries into the TEMPLE.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM observing ... he casually strolls towards the TEMPLE ENTRANCE ...

INT. TEMPLE CAVERN - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: ANN'S HANDS ... skillfully producing an accurate PENCIL RUBBING of a HIEROGLYPHICAL PANEL at the base of the KONG STATUE.

WIDE: A SINGLE LIGHT glows dimly in the VAST CHAMBER, creepily UNDER-LIGHTING the KONG STATUE ... LORD DARROW and DOUGIE lean over ANN - their WHISPERED VOICES AMPLIFIED by the CAVERN.

ANN
It looks like a map ... "Pul ... Pulau ...

ANN looks up at LORD DARROW, REALISATION dawning on her face.

LORD DARROW
What?

ANN
"Pulau Tengkorak ... The Island of the Skull"! There are navigational co-ordinates in Sanskrit ...

LORD DARROW
(scoffs)
There can't be an uncharted island - not in nineteen thirty-three! It's a myth!

LORD DARROW glances at DOUGIE ... he SHRUGS. ANN stands, holding the finished RUBBING - an accurate TRACING PAPER reproduction of the MAP.

ANN
(quietly)
Kong was a myth until ten o'clock this morning.

LORD DARROW stares at ANN ... taking in the enormity of the suggestion.

A LOOMING SHADOW slides over the wall behind them ... they SPIN AROUND!

DENHAM is strolling towards them. He LIGHTS a CIGARETTE as LORD DARROW takes the MAP ... folding it as casually as possible.

LORD DARROW
(casually)
Getting some good shots, old man?

DENHAM'S eyes are glued to the FOLDED MAP as LORD DARROW slides it into his TOP POCKET.

DENHAM
(quietly)
It couldn't be better, your Lordship.

EXT. TEMPLE BASIN - NIGHT

DENHAM strolls out of TEMPLE CAVERN ... he heads towards HERB, DEEP IN THOUGHT ...

TWO POWERFUL SEARCHLIGHTS suddenly SWING onto the SITE from the TOP of the CLIFFS ...

ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE!!! MILITARY VEHICLES roar through into the BASIN! 100 SUMATRAN SOLDIERS spill out of several trucks - they stream through the site, YELLING and roughly herding ARCHEOLOGISTS into the glare of the lights.

SOLDIERS
(yelling)
Raise your hands! Round up ... round up!

LORD DARROW rushes out of the TEMPLE, followed up ANN and DOUGIE ...

LORD DARROW
(horrified)
What is the meaning of this?

The Sumatran COLONEL IN CHARGE steps up.

COLONEL
No more permit! You go home!

SKETCHES and PAPERS are being TORN UP ... an ARMOURED CAR rams a 15 foot STATUE, smashing it into the ground. SOLDIERS hurry across the TEMPLE BASIN, carrying EXPLOSIVES.

LORD DARROW
(pleading)
You can't destroy these things!

The COLONEL looks at LORD DARROW with a steely gaze ...

COLONEL
(quietly)
Some things better left alone.

DENHAM is ESCORTED up to the COLONEL by a COUPLE OF SOLDIERS.

DENHAM
Carl Denham ... I'm an American!

DENHAM offers his HAND ... quietly passing a WAD OF US BANK NOTES to the COLONEL! DENHAM grins and turns to HERB, who is carrying the CAMERA & TRIPOD on his shoulder.

DENHAM (CONT'D)
(yelling)
Pack up the gear, Herb ... we're outta here!

The COLONEL glances at the BANK NOTES ... he angrily THROWS THEM DOWN, BARKING ORDERS in SUMATRAN ...

The SIDES of a MILITARY TRUCK swing down revealing a HEAVY MACHINE GUN! HERB just manages to dive clear as the CAMERA & TRIPOD are SHOT TO PIECES!

DENHAM
(screaming)
No!!

DENHAM leaps on the COLONEL in a sudden FRENZY, PUNCHING HIM VIOLENTLY! Within seconds, DENHAM has been hauled off by SOLDIERS ... he is BEATEN with RIFLE BUTTS.

KABOOM!!! An HUGE EXPLOSION blasts out of the TEMPLE ENTRANCE as the KONG STATUE is BLOWN INTO A 1000 PIECES!!!

ANN comforts LORD DARROW, who slowly sinks to his knees in SHOCK ... SOLDIERS roughly pull them apart and drag them towards a TRUCK.

COLONEL
Everyone under our protection. You will be escorted to airfield in the morning for plane home. No more permit!

LORD DARROW starts GASPING FOR AIR.

ANN
(worried)
Father!!! Stop - he's sick!

ANN tries to go to him, but is RESTRAINED ...

The SOLDIERS continue dragging LORD DARROW as he CONVULSES horribly ... a violent SPASM sends him slipping out of their grasp and thudding to the ground, white FLECKS OF FOAM oozing out of his mouth.

ANN breaks free and rushes over ... she cradles her father's head in her lap.

ANN
(panicked)
Somebody help me! Help me!

DENHAM staggers over ... he is BRUISED and BLEEDING. He kneels over LORD DARROW, placing his hand on the old man's chest. DENHAM looks up at ANN, shaking his head.

DENHAM
I'm sorry ...

ANN
(shocked)
No!

ANN bursts into tears ... DENHAM is HAULED AWAY as ANN falls on her FATHER'S BODY, SOBBING with GRIEF.

DENHAM (O.S)
(struggling)
Hey! That's mine!

ANN looks up ... DENHAM is struggling with 2 SOLDIERS. He has the FOLDED MAP IN HIS HAND! She watches as the MAP FALLS TO THE GROUND ...

SLOW MOTION: The MAP slowly rolls past her father's body, UNFOLDING in the gentle breeze.

SUDDENLY! DENHAM wrestles a SOLDIER'S RIFLE away ... He rams the butt into the COLONEL'S stomach, smashes another SOLDIER across the chin ...

In a flash, DENHAM has SNATCHED UP THE MAP, and DIVED into an empty ARMORED CAR!

CONFUSION ERUPTS! SOLDIERS SHOOT wildly at DENHAM as he slams the DOOR SHUT. Bullets RICOCHET off the ARMORED CAR ... DENHAM guns the engine and SPEEDS AWAY! He steers a course past HERB and JOSH, giving them just enough time to leap on before he ROARS THROUGH THE CUTTING!

SOLDIERS stream away, firing into the darkness, leaving ANN alone with her father's body.

SLOW MOTION: SOLDIERS run past an EMPTY TRUCK ... PUSH IN: on KEYS swinging in the ignition.

SLOW MOTION: ANN, her face TEAR-STAINED, but strangely IMPASSIVE slowly rises. She walks away from her father's body ... towards the TRUCK.

EXT. CUTTING - NIGHT

A CROWD of SOLDIERS shoot uselessly at the fleeing ARMORED CAR as it becomes a SPECK in the distance. The COLONEL BARKS ANGRY ORDERS and the SOLDIERS race back towards their VEHICLES ... They suddenly SCATTER in ALL DIRECTIONS! ANN ROARS PAST behind the wheel of the TRUCK! She speeds away after the ARMORED CAR!!!

EXT. LOGGING CAMP - NIGHT

All is QUIET at the LOGGING CAMP ... The place has just SHUT DOWN for the night. A LIGHT GLOWS from JACK'S CABIN - just off the side of the road ... on a SHARP CORNER.

INT. JACK'S CABIN - NIGHT

JACK is trying to light an old COAL RANGE in the corner of his spartan one-room CABIN. He wears a WOOLLY HAT, PAJAMAS - and on this cold night - his old FLYING JACKET.

He suddenly FROWNS as vehicle HEADLIGHTS throw a crazily swaying BEAM through his window. Before JACK can react, the ARMORED CAR slides - out of control - THROUGH THE SIDE OF HIS CABIN!

JACK flattens himself against the wall, as the ARMORED CAR MISSES HIM BY INCHES, sending a shower of SPLINTERED TIMBERS and GLASS flying in all directions!

The ARMORED CAR swings back onto the road ... JACK races after it, watching helplessly as it SPEEDS AWAY. He stands in the MIDDLE OF THE ROAD, surveying his DEMOLISHED CABIN.

JACK

Shit!

AT THAT MOMENT! ANN'S truck races out of the DARKNESS, headlights OFF. JACK spins around, FROZEN in the MIDDLE OF THE ROAD as she slams on the BRAKES! The TRUCK slews to an abrupt STOP.

JACK reacts with SURPRISE when ANN leans out of the CAB!

ANN
(urgent yell)
Get out of the bloody way!

JACK raises his hands in MOCK SURRENDER ... he SLOWLY STEPS OFF THE ROAD.

SUDDENLY ... MACHINE GUN FIRE whips around them! SEVERAL MILITARY VEHICLES are speeding down the hill! GUNS BLAZING!

ANN FLOORS IT ... mud flies up from the SPINNING WHEELS as her TRUCK moves away down the road ... BULLETS kick up the dirt around JACK'S FEET - they are shooting at him!

Without hesitation, he bounds after ANN'S TRUCK, throwing himself onto the TRAY as she PICKS UP SPEED!

INT. ANN'S TRUCK/JUNGLE ROAD - NIGHT

ANN reacts with ALARM as the PASSENGER DOOR is suddenly pulled open and JACK swings into the cab ... his PAJAMAS splattered with mud.

JACK
You could've given me time to change!

SMASH! A BULLET shatters the REAR WINDOW as SUMATRAN MILITARY CARS speed up behind them!

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT

The CHASE ACCELERATES down a narrow MOUNTAIN ROAD ... ANN throws her TRUCK around corners with recklessness.

ANN is well ahead of the MILITARY VEHICLES as they reach the bottom of the hill, racing on a DIRT ROAD beside a MUDDY RIVER ... JACK looks back through the SMASHED WINDOW ... ANN FAILS TO TAKE A SHARP CORNER ...

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT

The TRUCK flies off the road, SPLASHING INTO THE RIVER!

JACK and ANN brace themselves as the TRUCK lurches to a halt ... It lies HALF SUBMERGED in the RIVER beside an old WOODEN PIER. The WATER LEVEL around settles around THEIR CHESTS.

MILITARY VEHICLES roar past ... JACK turns to ANN.

JACK
You wanna tell me what we're doing here in this river?

ANN
(upset)
I'm sorry ... I just ... I just ... Shit!

ANN punches the DASH and starts to sob.

JACK
Hey! Take it easy ... we've got enough water in here.

ANN buries her head in her hands ...

ANN
(quietly)
My father ... died tonight.

JACK
Oh, shit ... sorry. Trust my big mouth.

Just as JACK says "big mouth": a huge gaping CROCODILE MOUTH suddenly LUNGES at him! It's JAWS SNAPPING at the SIDE WINDOW inches behind his head!

Another SNAPPING CROCODILE HEAD thrusts in through ANN'S OPEN WINDOW. She falls back into JACK'S LAP ... The CROC'S shoulders are too wide for the window - it gets wedged, SNAPPING at ANN, inches short of her nose! Within seconds, MORE CROCODILES descend on the TRUCK, CLAWING the WINDSCREEN - it threatens to break under the strain.

A FLASHLIGHT BEAM plays on the TRUCK ... TWO SOLDIERS approach holding RIFLES.

JACK
(desperate yell ... INDONESIAN with sub-titles)
Shoot them!

SOLDIER 1 aims his rifle at a CROC, but SOLDIER 2 BARKS AN ORDER and pushes the rifle away - a SADISTIC GRIN on his face!!!

JACK and ANN huddle together, their mouths at water level, TEETH SNAPPING ALL AROUND THEM. JACK can see the TWO SOLDIERS through the SIDE MIRROR .. they're ENJOYING THE SHOW - cracking a private JOKE.

JACK
(yelling ... INDONESIAN with sub-titles)
Come here!

The TWO SOLDIERS don't respond.

JACK (CONT'D)
(yelling ... INDONESIAN with sub-titles)
I said come here! I've got twenty grand stashed in a Singapore Bank. I don't have a will ... I want you to have it!

As JACK speaks, he is GASPING FOR AIR and SPITTING OUT WATER ... The TWO SOLDIERS WARILY APPROACH, their rifles trained on JACK.

JACK (CONT'D)
(INDONESIAN with sub-titles)
I want you and your families to get some reward from my lifetime of hard work.

JACK'S POV: The TWO SOLDIERS edge closer along the PIER - totally prepared for any trick JACK might pull ... Behind them - A HUGE FAT CROC has climbed the river bank and is WALKING STEALTHILY onto the pier!!!

JACK (CONT'D)
(INDONESIAN with sub-titles)
Royal Bank of Singapore ... Ask for Mr Sanyun Khan. I'll give you the account number ...

THE SOLDIERS NOD ... The FAT CROC is getting near, but moving VERY SLOWLY. ANN too is watching the approaching CROC through the MIRROR. A SNAPPING CROC nips JACK'S shoulder, DRAWING BLOOD. He gasps ...

JACK (CONT'D)
(INDONESIAN with sub-titles)
One ... Seven ... Guys! Write the damn thing down!

SOLDIER 1 lowers his rifle and pulls a NOTEPAD out of his pocket - just as ...

THE FAT CROC CHARGES! He covers the last few feet moving at LIGHTNING SPEED. He takes SOLDIER 2 in his JAWS and with a FLICK of his TAIL, sweeps SOLDIER 1 INTO THE WATER!

EN MASS, the CROCS leave the TRUCK and descend on the THRASHING SOLDIERS like a PACK OF PIRANHAS.

ANN and JACK quickly wade to the bank, the water behind them a CHURNING MAELSTROM!

They hurry over to the SOLDIER'S VEHICLE ... JACK jumps behind the wheel ... ANN climbs in picking a military PISTOL up off the seat.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUMATRAN HABOR - DAWN

The "VENTURE" is STEAMING AWAY from the DOCKS - SMOKE shoots out of it's FUNNEL as the boiler pressure rises ... The ORANGE LIGHT of DAWN fills the sky.

EXT. SUMATRAN DOCKS - DAWN

JACK and ANN drive up and run onto the DOCK ... They look filthy, bruised and very tired. ANN watches in despair as the "VENTURE" leaves the HARBOR MOUTH.

ANN
(urgent)
Where do I charter a boat?

JACK
There's nothing fast enough to catch that. Forget it. It's over.

JACK turns and walks away.

ANN (O.S)
Jack.

JACK slowly turns ... ANN is looking at the OLD 2-SEAT AVRO SEAPLANE, beached on the muddy bank. It is a TOTAL WRECK - broken wings, rudder hanging by one hinge, control wires snapped and tangled.

ANN (CONT'D)
(hopeful)
You can fly ...

JACK
Are you kidding?! That heap of junk will never leave the ground!

He turns and carries on walking ...

JACK (CONT'D)
Besides, I ain't flown since the war. I ain't ever flying again.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUMATRAN COAST - MORNING

The "VENTURE" is a couple of miles off the Sumatran coast, and heading out to sea.

INT. WHEELHOUSE - MORNING

CAPTAIN ENGLEHORN - a dapper skipper in his late 40's - is steering the ship. DENHAM is pacing anxiously while KURT - the FIRST MATE - studies ANN'S PENCIL RUBBING. He is marking a course on a MODERN MAP.

KURT
Here!

DENHAM watches with excitement as KURT makes a CROSS in the middle of a vast empty ocean.

KURT (CONT'D)
It says the island is surrounded by salak-pur ... a fog bank.

DENHAM
How many days?

ENGLEHORN
(adamant)
I've sailed these waters for fifteen years. There's no island there.

DENHAM
(angry)
I'm chartering this vessel, Engelhorn - how many days?

ENGLEHORN
(sullen)
Two ... maybe three.

The SOUND of an approaching PLANE!!!

EXT. VENTURE DECK - MORNING

DENHAM and KURT come out onto the deck, scanning the sky for the plane ...

KURT
Mr Denham!

KURT is pointing at the SEA.

DENHAM
(confused)
What the -

CRASH CUT TO:

EXT. SUMATRAN COAST - MORNING

The OLD SEAPLANE is speeding along the SURFACE OF THE WATER! The engine is belching BLACK SMOKE, but is still propelling the wreck at a far clip. The floats show signs of HASTY REPAIR to keep them watertight.

CLOSE ON: JACK in the FRONT COCKPIT, with ANN behind him ... SEA SPRAY is showering them. JACK is keeping an eye on the GAUGES.

JACK
(yelling above noise)
I'm gonna pull along side. I can't cut the engine - she'll never start again.

EXT. VENTURE/OCEAN - MORNING

Most of the CREW are lining the DECKS, watching with AMUSEMENT as the SEAPLANE pulls up along side. ENGLEHORN has cut the engines.

DENHAM groans when he recognises ANN.

ANN
(yelling)
I'm coming onboard! Throw down a ladder!

DENHAM
(yelling)
You're outta your league here, Miss Darrow!

ANN
(yelling)
There's no hard feelings, Mr Denham! I just want to come to the island with you!

MR DENHAM
(yelling)
Does this look like the "Queen Mary"?? We don't take passengers! Full steam ahead, Captain Engelhorn!

DENHAM walks away.

JACK
(sarcastic)
Well, that was certainly worth the effort! Whaddya do for an encore?

DENHAM and ENGELHORN head toward the WHEELHOUSE ... BANG! BANG! ... GUNSHOTS! They race back to the side ...

BANG! BANG! ANN is PUMPING PISTOL BULLETS into the plane's FLOATS! It immediately starts SINKING!

ANN
(yelling)
Are you going to stand there and watch us drown, Gentlemen?

ENGELHORN (O.S)
(orders)
Throw down a ladder ... Quick now!

CLOSE ON ... DENHAM.

DENHAM
(muttering)
Shit!

CUT TO:

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

WIDE SHOT ... The "VENTURE" steaming towards the horizon.

INT. WHEELHOUSE - DAY

ANN is quietly studying the MAP ... she is wearing a borrowed set of MEN'S CLOTHES.

FOOTSTEPS approach ...

DENHAM (O.S)
You're outta luck, Driscoll ... we're not going to Jakarta. We're going to find this island.

DENHAM and JACK enter the WHEELHOUSE. DENHAM is surprised to see ANN there ...

DENHAM (CONT'D)
(coolly)
Isn't that right, Miss Darrow?

DENHAM casually takes the MAP and ROLLS IT UP.

DENHAM (CONT'D)
After all ... we're a team. We have no conflict of interest here. This piece of dirt is gonna make us all famous. There's enough for everybody - right, Jack?

JACK
You're wasting your time. When do I get off this Goddamn boat?

DENHAM
A million dollars, Jack ... Does that sound like a waste of time? You make a film that thrills and excites the public - you're richer than God.

ANN
(wary)
Just what exactly are you expecting to find?

DENHAM
(mysterious)
Come, Miss Darrow ... both you and I know there's more on that island than a bunch of old ruins.

ANN
(quietly)
The Cult of the Beast God.

JACK SCOFFS.

DENHAM
What greater spectacle than a primitive race coming face to face with the civilised world!

JACK LAUGHS ... DENHAM pours himself a drink.

DENHAM (CONT'D)
Go ahead and laugh, Driscoll. Miss Darrow and I are sailing into history.

JACK looks at ANN.

JACK
You're not taking this guy seriously?

ANN
I don't know what we'll find ...
(pointedly)
... but I do know Mr Denham has no right to claim this discovery as his own.

JACK
Your father's dead. What are you trying to prove? That you're as good as your old man?

ANN
(incredulous)
I beg your pardon?

JACK
You've got his taste in clothes.

ANN looks at JACK with CONTEMPT. DENHAM glances from one to the other - a BEMUSED SMIRK crosses his face, as he raises his glass in a toast.

DENHAM
(sarcastic)
Happy days!

CUT TO:

INT. ANN'S CABIN - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: LORD DARROW'S WATCH ... 9.35 ... slow ticking of the second hand.

ANN is lying on her bed, looking at her father's WATCH. She has been CRYING.

The SOUND of a MOURNFUL VIOLIN wafts into the cabin ... playing "Brahms' Lullaby".

EXT. DECK - NIGHT

ANN emerges from her cabin ... KURT is at the stern of the ship, hunched on a box, PLAYING A VIOLIN. It is a HEAVY SEA and SPRAY mists over ANN, as she walks towards the rail.

ANN quietly withdraws her father's SILVER FOB-WATCH from her jacket ... she slowly holds it over the side of the ship ... SEA SPRAY showers against her face as she releases it into the churning sea.

SUDDEN VOMIT SOUNDS ... ANN JUMPS WITH FRIGHT as a LIFEBOAT COVER suddenly lifts up and JACK leans out, THROWING UP into the sea! He glances at ANN with BLEARY EYES.

JACK
Haven't found my sea-legs yet. I'm not a good sailor ... but's who's complaining? I'm on a wonderful cruise with first class accommodation ... and a beautiful babe has just walked into my bedroom.

JACK rolls back in the LIFEBOAT ...

JACK (CONT'D)
Yeah! Life's looking pretty damn good at the moment ...

JACK looks her up and down ...

JACK (CONT'D)
... and so are you.

JACK suddenly SITS UP WITH A START!

JACK (CONT'D)
(alarmed)
Jesus Christ!

A LARGE LUMP is moving under JACK'S CLOTHES ... he SLAPS and THUMPS at it in a PANIC.

A large SHIP RAT suddenly pops out of his collar and scampers away.

ANN looks at JACK with AMUSEMENT, as he struggles to regain his composure!

ANN
Keeping good company I see.

ANN turns away, hiding her GIGGLES ... she heads back towards her cabin.

JACK
(yelling indignantly)
Yeah well, enjoy the joke, cos when this boat reaches Jakarta, I'll be first off. You'll never see me again ... and believe me - that day cannot come soon enough.

JACK momentarily disappears into the LIFEBOAT ...quickly POPPING UP again!

JACK (CONT'D)
(yelling angrily)
I've got no problem with you ignoring me for the rest of the voyage!

JACK rolls back into the lifeboat, pulling the cover across ... as the SOUND of LOUD LAUGHTER carries from ANN'S CABIN.

EXT. FOREDECK - DAY

HERB is CLEANING 2 CAMERAS in the sunshine - they lie on a blanket IN PIECES. His SHOULDER is still BANDAGED.

ANN is relaxing beside him. HERB lifts the CAMERA BODY and WINCES.

ANN
How's your shoulder?

HERB
Shoulder's fine ... It's this -

HERB pulls up his sleeve - ANN flinches at the sight of an UGLY SCAR on his arm.

HERB (CONT'D)
(matter-of-fact)
Sea Lion up in Nova Scotia. The sinew never really mended. Mr Denham won an award for that picture. Personally I'm more proud of some wonderful footage we shot in the Rockies ... a pair of Grizzlies - er, you know ... mating. Excuse my language!

HERB pulls up his TROUSER LEG, revealing AN ARTIFICAL LIMB!

HERB (CONT'D)
Cost me my leg - but as Mr Denham says ... "Pain is temporary, Film is forever"

ANN looks appalled.

SUDDEN CLATTER OF FEET as KURT emerges from a hold, heading for the WHEELHOUSE.

KURT
(excited)
We've arrived!

ANN leaps to her feet.

CUT TO:

INT. WHEELHOUSE - DAY

A SWEEPING PAN of the HORIZON ...

... NOTHING BUT EMPTY SEA.

DENHAM, ENGLEHORN, KURT and ANN are standing in the WHEELHOUSE, looking in ALL DIRECTIONS.

ENGLEHORN
(smug)
I guess that answers your questions. There's no island on these co-ordinates.

DENHAM
(angry)
What are you saying? It doesn't exist?

ENGLEHORN sweeps his arm across the horizon.

ENGLEHORN
No island - not even a lousy fogbank.

DENHAM throws the MAP on the floor in a fit of anger.

ANN
It has to be here! You can't just abandon the search.

DENHAM
Miss Darrow, this expedition is costing me two grand a day ... if you have any suggestions, I wanna hear them.

ANN looks around HELPLESSLY ...

CLOSE ON: THE MAP ... a gust of wind blows it towards the door. JACK'S FOOT pins it down.

ENGLEHORN
I'm turning this ship around and charting a course for Jakarta!

JACK (O.S)
What's your hurry?

JACK is standing quietly in the doorway ... ENGLEHORN looks at him warily.

JACK (CONT'D)
I know a bit about navigation ...

JACK glances down at the MAP beneath his foot.

JACK (CONT'D)
... and from where I'm standing, I'd guess we're half a degree out. That puts the island a couple of hundred miles north-west.

ENGLEHORN
(flustered)
Are you questioning my navigational skills?

JACK shrugs ...

JACK
Sure ... ok ...

DENHAM
What's he talking about, Englehorn?

DENHAM stares at ENGLEHORN ... ENGLEHORN avoids his gaze.

DENHAM (CONT'D)
(darkly)
Steer a course north-west ... Skipper.

EXT. DECK - DAY

JACK is walking away from the bridge ... ANN runs after him.

ANN
Jack!

JACK pauses ... he turns.

ANN (CONT'D)
(awkwardly)
Thank you.

JACK
(shrugs)
It's ok ... What's a few more days on this rusty hulk?

ANN
Yeah, well ... I owe you one.

JACK'S face LIGHTS UP.

JACK
I guess you do ... Care to join me for a drink?

CUT TO:

INT. LIFEBOAT - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: MUGS click together ... JACK and ANN are huddled in the LIFEBOAT, TOASTING each other with whiskey filled ship's mugs.

JACK
Bottoms up!

ANN
Cheers Flight Lieutenant!

JACK is taken aback ... he sees his old LEATHER FLYING COAT is lying open, revealing a faded "Flight Lieutenant Driscoll" label in the collar.

ANN
What's the matter?

JACK pulls the COAT away.

JACK
I don't like people snooping.

ANN
I wasn't snooping.

JACK
Ok, ok ... let's change the subject.
(patting the seat)
Why don't you sit next to me. Much cozier.

ANN
(ignoring him)
Is it true?

JACK raises his eyebrows ...

ANN (CONT'D)
That you won the Congressional medal of Honor?

JACK
(warily)
Where did you hear that?

ANN
The locals say you were a regular war hero.

JACK
I shot down a few planes, if that's what you mean.

ANN
(flippant)
... And killed a few people.

JACK looks away.

ANN (CONT'D)
I'm sorry ... I don't know why I said that. Stupid ... stupid!

JACK
(shrugs)
I've seen men die.

JACK stares silently at the bottom of the boat.

ANN gently reaches across the TAKES HIS HAND ... He PULLS IT AWAY.

JACK
Hey ... hey! Do you think I'm gonna cry or something? Jesus Christ! You're not gonna get tears out of me!

ANN slowly takes his FLYING COAT and sits next to him, wrapping the COAT around their shoulders.

ANN
(softly)
I'm cold, Jack.

She snuggles against JACK ... he puts his arm around her.

AT THAT MOMENT: The SHIP'S ENGINES SUDDENLY STOP.

JACK and ANN both peer above the edge of the lifeboat ... PUSH IN on their AWESTRUCK FACES ...

EXT. VENTURE - NIGHT

WIDE SHOT: The "VENTURE" sits on a FLAT SEA, DWARFED by nearly vertical TOWERING WALL OF FOG ... It rises hundreds of feet into the air, lit by an EERIE MOONLIGHT.

INT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: ENGLEHORN knocks back a GLASS OF SCOTCH. He sits alone in the WHEELHOUSE ... the ship has stopped, the wheel abandoned.

ANN and JACK race into the WHEELHOUSE, followed by DENHAM.

ENGLEHORN
I can take you no further, Denham.

ENGLEHORN is trembling with fear. KURT arrives in the WHEELHOUSE.

DENHAM
Kurt! Take her into the fog. Nice and slowly.

KURT pushes the lever to "Slow Ahead" and MANS THE WHEEL as the "VENTURE" starts to crawl towards the fog.

ENGLEHORN downs ANOTHER SCOTCH.

ENGLEHORN
Seven years ago I picked up a castaway - the skipper of a Norwegian barque.

The GROUP listen to ENGLEHORN in SILENCE.

ENGLEHORN (CONT'D)
I have never seen a man so mentally ravaged. He had gone blind, not through any injury - but because his mind could no longer deal with the terrible sights he had witnessed. I sat with him during his last night on earth, listening to his fevered whisperings. He spoke of sailing into a thick fog and of running aground on an uncharted island. He spoke of a huge wall, built by a long forgotten civilisation and of a creature - neither man nor beast - that lived behind that wall. Of the thirty crewmen who made it ashore, he was the only one who looked into the eyes of the Beast and survived.

ANN instinctively grasps JACK'S HAND.

ENGLEHORN (CONT'D)
If we sail into that fog, it will be the death of us all.

LOW ANGLE: DENHAM - the WINDOWS of the bridge behind him.

DENHAM
I'm not a man who easily succumbs to fear, Captain Englehorn.

As DENHAM talks, the FOG swirls over the WINDOWS, encapsulating the "VENTURE" in a MILKY SHROUD.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOG BANK - NIGHT

The "VENTURE" glides silently through the fog.

EXT. VENTURE DECKS - NIGHT

MONTAGE ... TENSE FACES: ANN ... JACK ... DENHAM ... ENGLEHORN. Nobody talks, just stares ahead into the gloom ... CREW line the front of the boat, looking for rocks ... The PROPELLERS push the ship forward ... The PROW cuts through the water.

ANN stands alone ... peering into the MIST, now lit with a SICKLY YELLOW GLOW.

DENHAM emerges from out of the GLOOM ... he slides up BESIDE HER.

ANN
Sun's coming up ...
(checks watch)
We've been in the fog for six hours.

ANN reacts with surprise as DENHAM glides his finger across her cheek!

DENHAM
(whispers)
You have tiny drops of water clinging to your skin.

He starts to NUZZLE HER NECK! ANN PUSHES HIM AWAY!

ANN
Get off me!

DENHAM bares his teeth in an UGLY GRIN ...

AT THAT MOMENT ... the SHIP SHUDDERS!

EXT. UNDERWATER - DAWN

The "VENTURE'S" HULL scrapes against a CORAL OUTCROP.

EXT. VENTURE DECKS - DAWN

A SAILOR calls from the prow ...

SAILOR
(yelling)
Eight fathoms!

KURT is manning the wheel.

KURT
Hold her steady ...

The FOG is suddenly THINNING ... within seconds the spectacular sight of SKULL ISLAND materializes in front of them! ... About 7 miles long by 1 mile wide, STEEP CLIFFS rising from the sea, DENSE JUNGLE growth across it's interior. The island has several JAGGED RIDGES, dominated by a tall, sheer MOUNTAIN at the far end.

ANN is standing next to JACK ... she is looking through BINOCULARS.

ANN
(excited)
I can see the wall!

JACK takes the BINOCULARS ...

BINOCULAR POV: At the closest end, the island forms a NARROW PENINSULA ... jutting above the canopy of TREES, JACK can make out the top of a HUGE STONE WALL, seemingly cutting the peninsula off from the rest of the island. OTHER RUINS are visible ... At the foot of the peninsula is a SANDY BEACH, the only visible LANDING SITE.

DENHAM has been conspicuously SILENT ... he is leaning against the rail, ENTRANCED by the island.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM.

DENHAM
(quietly)
We've hit paydirt ...

CUT TO:

EXT. VENTURE DECK - MORNING

The atmosphere on deck is buzzing with EXCITED EXPECTATION as a BOAT is lowered into the water, ready for the short trip to SKULL ISLAND ... RIFLES, FOOD, WATER & CAMERA EQUIPMENT is loaded on board. DENHAM and 6 CREW - including ENGLEHORN and HERB - clamber down the ship's ladders into the BOAT.

JACK is lying in the sun, watching the activities with a degree of BEMUSEMENT. He clearly has no interest in getting involved.

ANN skips past ... she is clutching SKETCHBOOKS and NOTEPADS - VERY EXCITED, like a little girl at a picnic ....

ANN
Aren't you coming, Jack?

JACK shakes his head.

JACK
Bring me back a souvenir.

KURT helps ANN climb onto the ladder.

DENHAM (O.S)
(yelling)
Hey, Kurt!

DENHAM is looking up from the BOAT ... OARS are being fitted into ROWLOCKS.

DENHAM
(yelling)
Not her! There's no room for her!

ANN pauses in DISBELIEF - the BOAT is half empty.

ANN
Buggar that!

She starts climbing down. DENHAM pushes the BOAT away from the "VENTURE" with an oar.

DENHAM
(yelling)
It's a little far to swim, Miss Darrow!

ANN watches helplessly as the SAILORS start rowing towards the island.

ANN
(yelling)
You bastard!

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - DAY

The BOAT rides a wave onto the beach. DENHAM jumps out, followed by the OTHERS - RIFLES at the ready ... HERB staggers up the beach with the CAMERA & TRIPOD on his shoulder.

As they warily advance up the narrow SANDY BEACH towards the jungle, STONE STRUCTURES become visible, half buried in VINE STREWN FOLIAGE.

The GROUP advance into the JUNGLE ... a GLOOMY, CREEPY place. DENHAM is elated.

DENHAM
(whispers)
Get a shot of these ruins, Herb.

HERB sets up. The style of stonework is clearly from the SAME CULTURE as the SUMATRAN TEMPLE.

HERB'S CAMERA POV: Panning across the RUINS ...

AT THAT MOMENT ... a BIG FRIGHT as a NATIVE POPS UP into HERB'S SHOT, swinging a WEAPON towards CAMERA.

PUSH INTO: DENHAM reacting with ALARM and SHOCK ...

CLOSE ON: HERB'S CAMERA falls towards the ground ...

HERB'S CAMERA POV ... Weird ANGLE as CAMERA hits ground - RUSHING NATIVE FEET trample past LENS towards a TERRIFIED DENHAM and SAILORS ... FOOT KICKS CAMERA ...

CRASH TO BLACK.

CUT TO:

EXT. VENTURE - DAY

JACK is lying in the sun ... He watches KURT pacing ANXIOUSLY. He pauses to peer through BINOCULARS.

KURT
(nervous)
They should be back by now ... they're late ... way too late!

AT THAT MOMENT ... A LOUD INCESSANT DRUM BEAT pounds across the water from the island. KURT FREEZES!

KURT (CONT'D)
Holy shit!

CUT TO:

INT. ANN'S CABIN - DAY

JACK bursts into ANN'S CABIN ... she is lying on her bed. JACK throws her a RIFLE.

JACK
We need every man we can get!

CUT TO:

EXT. SKULL ISLAND COAST - DAY

KURT, O'BRIEN, COOPER, 3 SAILORS, JACK and ANN row silently towards SKULL ISLAND ... towards the SOUND OF the INCESSANT DRUMBEAT. Everyone is armed with a RIFLE.

They pass through jagged rocks ... past the WRECK of a wooden coastal schooner - possibly the NORWEGIAN BARQUE, ENGLEHORN referred to. The SKELETAL SHIP is a creepy sight - particularly the row of STRANGE BIRD-LIKE CREATURES perched along a rotten mainspar.

The BOAT rounds an OUTCROP of rocks, and lines up for the shore ... An EERIE PHENOMENON suddenly occurs - The distant MOUNTAIN, a mid range RIDGE LINE and foreground ROCKS all line up - providing an abstract, but distinct image of a HUMAN SKULL ... visible only from that one position.

ANN
(captivated)
Skull Island ...

ANN instinctively GRASPS JACK'S HAND. He squeezes it tightly.

CUT TO:

EXT. SKULL ISLAND BEACH - DAY

THE BOAT slides onto the sand next to DENHAM'S EMPTY BOAT ... Nobody talks. Using HAND SIGNALS, JACK quickly leads the GROUP up the beach and into the JUNGLE.

ANN stares wide-eyed, at the RUINS.

EXT. SKULL ISLAND JUNGLE - DAY

CLOSE ON: The FALLEN CAMERA ... JACK warily steps over it, scanning the JUNGLE, RIFLE poised. The FOLIAGE is TRAMPLED, but there is no sign of DENHAM'S PARTY.

The DRUM BEATS are close, coming from deeper inside the ISLAND, through seemingly IMPENETRABLE JUNGLE.

ANN
(loud whispers)
Jack!

ANN is standing by the ENTRANCE to a TUNNEL, set into a ROCKY CLIFF. The DRUM BEATS are ECHOING DOWN THE TUNNEL ... JACK signals KURT, O'BRIEN, COOPER & the 3 SAILORS to follow ...

INT. TUNNEL/CRYPT - DAY

The TUNNEL is man-made, and ORNATELY DECORATED. LIGHT FILTERS in through cracks in the roof.

The TUNNEL suddenly widens out to a large CHAMBER ... The GROUP collectively GASP at the sight of over a hundred MUMMIES lining the walls! They are all neatly arranged in alcoves and are dressed in some kind of CEREMONIAL clothing.

A HUGE STATUE of KONG stands sentry at the far end of the chamber - which clearly carries on through another archway. The place has the atmosphere of a CATHEDRAL.

A CREEPY TRANCE-LIKE MOANING now joins the DRUMS, the SOUND is very close.

INT. SKULL CHAMBER - DAY

JACK leads the GROUP into a large chamber, about the size of a squash court. DAYLIGHT FLOODS IN through openings carved in the representation of the EYES, NOSE and MOUTH of a SKULL ... The MOUTH being the doorway which leads straight into the heart of the NATIVE CITY ... The RITUALISTIC SOUNDS are very LOUD.

The GROUP hurry across the chamber and peer out of the doorway, careful to remain concealed ... They stare in WONDERMENT at the sight ahead ...

EXT. NATIVE CITY - DAY

SPECTACULAR RUINS surround an open square ... It is FILLED with 200 NATIVES - in the midst of a WEIRD RITUALISTIC CEREMONY ...

The SKULL ISLAND NATIVES are similar to Solomon Islanders: Their skin is very dark, their features broad - but that is where the Melonesian likeness ends ... Like the architecture, their dress, headwear and weapons suggest an INCA or EGYPTIAN level of culture, but with a fierceness, or even violence suggested in their design. These people are SCARY ...

A YOUNG WOMAN sits bedecked in flowers atop AN ALTAR in the center of the square ...

... DWARFING ALL ELSE is the WALL. It rises directly from the square, towering 5 stories into the air. A STONE structure, with ORNATE CARVINGS and decorated with HUGE TUSK-like BONES and BRONZE KONG figures. In the center of the wall is an ENORMOUS 40 foot WOODEN GATE, strongly built and very old. From the vines and weeds that grow from cracks, it has clearly not been used for many years. The wall is not vertical on this side - it slopes like the pyramids, allowing quick access to the top.

JACK frowns ... DENHAM, ENGLEHORN, HERB and the 4 SAILORS are held CAPTIVE! They are in a state of DRUG-INDUCED DELIRIUM ... a WITCHDOCTOR is forcing a MILKY FLUID into their mouths from a GOURD.

The NATIVES suddenly drop to their knees, all facing the YOUNG WOMAN who remains STRANGELY SERENE. They start CHANTING softly ... "KONG ... KONG ... KONG"

ANN
(whispering)
She looks like a bride ... Is it a wedding?

KURT
(whispers)
It's a sacifical ceremony. They're gonna kill the girl!

ANN looks at him ... HORRIFIED.

JACK
(sudden urgency)
She's not the only one!

YOUNG NATIVE MEN armed with SPIKED CLUBS are quickly closing in on the CAPTIVES.

JACK swings his RIFLE to his shoulder ... TOO LATE! SAILOR 1 is clubbed to the ground! JACK targets ANOTHER NATIVE about to kill ENGLEHORN ...

BANG!!! The NATIVE is shot off his feet! ... The CEREMONY SUDDENLY GOES QUIET! Without the incessant noise, we can clearly hear DENHAM MOANING in DELIRIUM.

JACK steps out into the SQUARE, SWINGING the RIFLE from SIDE TO SIDE ... KURT, O'BRIEN, COOPER, ANN & the 3 SAILORS follow. The LOUD GUNSHOT has stunned the NATIVES, but JACK knows they haven't got much time.

JACK
(urgent)
Grab them ... we're heading back to the ship. Hurry!

The SAILORS move aside, towards the CAPTIVES ... revealing ANN.

The NATIVES GASP! They stare at her ... She looks around nervously, GOLDEN HAIR swirling in the SUNLIGHT. The NATIVES resume their chant "KONG ... KONG ... KONG" - except this time it's DIRECTED AT ANN!

KURT
It's Ann ... they want Ann!

JACK slips a PROTECTIVE ARM around her waist.

A NATIVE starts rising ... JACK fires into the air, and they back away ENMASS. ANN puts her hands on her ears as 100 NATIVES suddenly emit a strange PIERCING SCREECH like a pack of frightened monkeys.

JACK
(yelling)
Go ... Go!

KURT and the SAILORS quickly steer DENHAM, ENGLEHORN, HERB and 3 SAILORS back through the RUINED CITY towards the beach. They have to herd them like sheep ... DENHAM is staring at his fingers like someone who has never seen a hand before ... ENGLEHORN is GIGGLING at some private joke.

EXT. RUINED CITY/JUNGLE - DAY

The GROUP hurrying through the last of the RUINS ... nearing the BEACH. NATIVES are following them, stealthily slipping behind RUINS and UNDERGROWTH ... ALL EYES ON ANN. JACK is covering their retreat, occasionally shooting over the NATIVE'S HEADS if they get too close.

DENHAM suddenly SCREAMS ... his DISTORTED POV: THREATENING, GROTESQUE NATIVE FACES. He suddenly snatches KURT'S RIFLE, spins around and starts shooting straight at the NATIVES!

The NATIVES suddenly FRENZY at the sight of their comrades FALLING DEAD ... THEY CHARGE!

JACK
(yelling)
Run!

JACK grabs DENHAM by the collar and hauls him towards the beach ... A NATIVE SPEAR GRAZES JACK'S SHOULDER!

EXT. BEACH - DAY

The GROUP races across the BEACH, pushing the DRUGGED CAPTIVES towards the BOATS.

SAILORS SHOOT into the CHARGING NATIVES, holding them a bay ... allowing EVERYONE to clamber into the BOATS.

They rapidly head out to sea, leaving the NATIVES SCREAMING on the beach.

CUT TO:

EXT. VENTURE - DAY

DENHAM is lifted onto the deck ... he's gripping his temples against a FIERCE PAIN, but has regained some LUCIDITY.

DENHAM
(gasping)
Kurt! Get the men together ... we're heading back tonight to film the sacrifice.

KURT
You're in no fit state, Mr Denham.

DENHAM
Who's in charge here? Do as I say, Goddamn it!

SAILORS start to gather.

COOPER
Jimmy Dawson got killed.

O'BRIEN
We ain't going back!

DENHAM staggers to his feet.

DENHAM
(angry)
You'll do what I say! You men knew the risks when you signed on for this job!

O'BRIEN
Forget it, Mr Denham - we've made our decision.

ENGLEHORN
(hoarse yell)
Stoke the boilers!

ENGLEHORN staggers past DENHAM, giving him a COOL LOOK.

ENGLEHORN (CONT'D)
As soon as we've got some steam, we're outta here.

The SAILORS disperse to prepare the ship for sailing. DENHAM grabs KURT.

DENHAM
You piece of shit - you've turned them against me!

KURT
No, Mr Denham - You did that all by yourself.

WHACK! DENHAM PUNCHES KURT! WHACK! WHACK! He knocks KURT to the deck.

OTHER SAILORS leap onto DENHAM ... who lashes out with a frightening degree of violence.

JACK
(yelling)
Hey! Cut it out!

JACK pulls DENHAM away, slamming him against a wall - his arm under DENHAM'S chin.

JACK (CONT'D)
Get the message asshole ... we're leaving. I suggest you spend some time in your cabin.

DENHAM glares at JACK - a TRICKLE of BLOOD running from his nose. He suddenly shrugs JACK off and staggers away towards his cabin.

INT. ANN'S CABIN - EVENING

ANN is sitting in her cabin, writing up notes and making sketches ...

The SOUNDS of the "VENTURE" being prepared for sailing are heard.

A KNOCK ON THE DOOR ... ANN looks up as JACK comes in, PEELING HIS SHIRT OFF!

ANN
What are you doing?

JACK
I'm cut ... here.

JACK points to the SPEAR WOUND on his shoulder ... he sits on HER BED.

ANN continues SKETCHING.

ANN
You've come to the wrong person. I'm not much of a nurse.

JACK
(grimaces)
It hurts.

ANN
(dryly)
It's not going to work, Jack ...
I've seen naked men before.

JACK
(indignant)
Hey! I'm in real pain here!

ANN sighs ... gets up and INSPECTS THE WOUND.

ANN
(melodramatic)
Oh my God! It's bad!

ANN reaches for a SEWING KIT.

JACK
(uneasy)
Whaddaya doing?

ANN
You're in luck ... the skipper asked me to mend his shirt.

ANN produces a HUGE NEEDLE ... JACK looks ILL!

JACK
Oh no! I'm not good with needles!

ANN
Shut your eyes ... this is probably going to be quite painful!

BIG CU of NEEDLE POINT ... JACK'S EYES ROLL UP - he falls back on the bed ... FAINTING!

ANN
(alarmed)
Jack ... Jack?

She kneels over JACK, peering at him with CONCERN.

SUDDENLY! JACK grabs her shoulders and PULLS HER DOWN ONTO THE BED KISSING HER! She PUSHES HIM AWAY.

ANN
What the hell are you doing?

JACK
I'm sorry ... I was outta line -
(pain)
Ow!

ANN has grabbed him by the SHOULDERS ...

ANN
Shut up!

ANN KISSES HIM! In a frenzy of passion, JACK starts KISSING HER NECK and SHOULDERS. ANN shuts her eyes ...

ANN
(sighs)
I promised myself this wouldn't happen. I don't want to get tangled up with some man.

JACK continues kissing her ...

JACK
No one ever does ...

ANN
(softly)
I care about you Jack.

ANN gently pulls away ... JACK goes to KISS her again.

JACK
Do we have to talk about this now?

ANN
I just need to know where this is going.

JACK
Let me show you ...

JACK gently tries to push her down on the bed, but she resists.

ANN
I'm talking about love, Jack.

JACK
Oh ...

JACK pauses, looks at her ... she waits expectantly.

JACK (CONT'D)
Look ... I'm not sure where you're coming from, but...

JACK pauses for a moment, then reaches out for his shirt.

JACK (CONT'D)
I'm no good at this emotional stuff... I kinda seize up. I don't put a lotta stock in commitment.

ANN slowly nods ...

JACK
(softly)
I didn't realise ... Hey! No hard feelings ...

JACK steps away from her ... He leaves the cabin.

ANN angrily KICKS HER SKETCHBOOK across the cabin.

EXT. UNDERWATER - NIGHT

The "VENTURE'S" PROPELLERS spin into life.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - NIGHT

CREW hurry about as the ship is about to sail. ENGLEHORN leans out of the WHEELHOUSE.

ENGLEHORN
(yelling)
Raise the anchor!

O'BRIEN (O.S)
Aye, aye, Captain!

The PENINSULA on SKULL ISLAND is AGLOW with an ORANGE LIGHT ... DRUMS and CHANTING can be heard ...

PULL back to reveal ANN, leaning against the stern rail - looking pensively at the ISLAND.

The "VENTURE'S" ENGINES start HUMMING, drowning out sounds from the NATIVES.

CREEPING POV: Someone is WATCHING ANN ... the POV moves stealthily down the deck towards her. ANN suddenly turns ... the POV retreats into the SHADOWS.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM quietly stepping back into the gloom ... his face emotionless.

ANN is getting spooked ... she turns away from the rail, nervously looking back at the ship - as if aware of somebody's presence.

SUDDENLY! TWO NATIVES RISE BEHIND ANN!!! They grab her, clamping a hand over her mouth!

DENHAM: His eyes glisten with ... excitement. He presses himself further into the shadows.

WIDER: SEVERAL NATIVES are silently creeping over the "VENTURE"! They lift ANN over the side ... she STRUGGLES helplessly as they PASS HER DOWN into a NATIVE DUG OUT.

WITHOUT A SOUND, THE NATIVES slip back into their CANOES and paddle away towards SKULL ISLAND!

The "VENTURE'S" ENGINES WIND UP and she starts MOVING AWAY towards the FOG BANK!

DENHAM hurries towards the STERN, suddenly throwing himself onto the deck, with a SCREAM!

DENHAM
(pained scream)
Help! Somebody! Quick! Agggh!

SAILORS emerge and run towards him.

DENHAM (CONT'D)
(pained scream)
The bastards have taken Ann!

COOPER rushes to the side of the boat ...

COOPER
They've got her! I can see her!
They've got Ann!

JACK arrives in time to CATCH A GLIMPSE of the CANOES before they VANISH into the GLOOM.

DENHAM
(pained)
I tried to stop them ... there was too many!

JACK
(urgent)
Launch a boat! Quick!

O'BRIEN
No way - we ain't going back there!

JACK rushes past him and feverishly works at lowering a lifeboat.

JACK
I don't give a shit ... I'll go alone! Somebody get me a gun.

The SAILORS are gathering around sheepishly.

JACK
(yelling)
Get me a Goddamn gun!

KURT steps forward.

KURT
I'm with you, Driscoll.

OTHER SAILORS step forward ...

COOPER
Yeah, me too.

SAILOR 1
Count me in.

As the CREW rallies behind JACK, DENHAM quietly SMIRKS to himself ... he slides up to HERB.

DENHAM
(whispers)
Get the camera, Herb. Make sure you've got plenty of film stock.

CUT TO:

INT. ENGLEHORN'S CABIN - NIGHT

ENGLEHORN throws a heavy CABINET DOOR OPEN ... 10 brand new THOMPSON SUB-MACHINE GUNS are neatly lined up in racks. Complete with 70 round drum magazines, the TOMMY GUN is the Chicago gangster's weapon-of-choice.

JACK, DENHAM and a bunch of SAILORS are crowded in ENGLEHORN'S CABIN. DENHAM cradles a TOMMY GUN like a new-born baby.

DENHAM
You are a man of surprises, Captain Englehorn!

ENGLEHORN
(muttering)
Can't take chances with pirates in these waters.

Young JOSH hurries in.

JOSH
(excited)
What's going on?

DENHAM swings around to face the crew, clipping a DRUM into his TOMMY GUN.

DENHAM
Carl Denham Productions has just declared war on Skull Island!

CUT TO:

EXT. NATIVE CITY - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: ANN ... She is being prepared for SACRIFICE! NATIVES are holding her arms ... A BRIDAL HEADRESS is placed on her head, COVERING HER HAIR. She is in the middle of the CROWDED SQUARE, lit by FLAMING TORCHES.

She closes her eyes ... STRANGELY SUBDUED.

The WITCHDOCTOR DANCES in front of her, FLICKING OILS from a small pot over her body.

ANN SUDDENLY LASHES OUT! She kicks the WITCHDOCTOR in the NUTS, simultaneously PULLING HER HANDS FREE and RUNNING through the crowd towards the beach!

She only gets 5 paces ...

ANN is TACKLED and ROUGHLY HOISTED ONTO the ALTAR. HER HANDS are tied securely to 2 ornately carved pillars. TEARS flood into her eyes.

"KONG ... KONG ... KONG" THE CHANT begins.

NATIVES start TURNING a HUGE WHEEL and the ALTAR STARTS TO CLIMB the slope towards the TOP OF THE WALL, moving on tracks like a primitive cable car.

CLOSE ON: NATIVE FACES, screaming and chanting, building up to a FRENZY. They climb the WALL behind ANN, carrying FLAMING TORCHES.

NATIVE SOUNDS FADE AWAY ... BEAUTIFUL, SAD MUSIC drifts in, giving the sequence an ETHEREAL ATMOSPHERE.

EXT. WALL/JUNGLE - NIGHT

ANN is weeping as the ALTAR reaches the top of the wall. For the first time, we get a glimpse of the OTHER SIDE ...

The WALL falls away vertically into a ROCKY GROTTO that leads into the DENSE TANGLED JUNGLE of SKULL ISLAND.

The ALTAR stops ON TOP OF THE WALL. Over 100 natives arrive just behind ANN, and spread out along the parapet. 2 NATIVES in CEREMONIAL COSTUME kneel beside the ALTAR, quickly and expertly adjusting BOLTS AND LEVERS. They signal back down to the SQUARE ...

ANN gasps as the ALTAR suddenly lurches out OVER THE EDGE OF THE WALL! It is being slowly SWUNG OUT over the GROTTO by a pair of cantilevered arms, hinged at the base of the wall.

CLOSE ON: NATIVE torches LIGHT POOLS OF OIL contained in cavities at the top of the wall. SMALL DAMS are released, allowing the FLAMING OIL to flow down CHUTES and CHANNELS, cleverly cut into the cliffs on either side of the grotto.

The FLAMING OIL ignites LARGER POOLS in HUGE HOLLOWED OUT CHAMBERS within the cliffs - carved into the shape of SKULLS. The SKULLS burst into GLOWING LIFE - just like 40 foot high HALLOWEEN PUMPKINS!

WIDE SHOT: ANN looks TINY atop the ALTAR which has almost reached the ground ... The ENORMOUS GLOWING SKULLS illuminating her ... The WALL TOWERING UP BEHIND HER. NATIVES line the top of the wall, holding FIERY TORCHES. The ALTAR settles into neatly CARVED RECESSES.

The HUGE GONG STARTS TOLLING ...

ANN is facing the INKY BLACK JUNGLE ... She is PANTING hard, trying to face her death with as much composure as she can muster.

A LOUD SPLINTERING SOUND comes from within the JUNGLE - something VERY BIG is moving towards the GROTTO!

NATIVES CHANT: "KONG ... KONG ... KONG"

ANN instinitively pulls at her bonds - to no avail. She can now see a DARK SHAPE approaching her. OILY SMOKE from the FIRES drifts across, OBSCURING HER VISION ... she can now only hear the FOOTSTEPS. It is a HUGE CREATURE, BREATHING HEAVILY ... It stops in front of her - SMOKE still blocking her vision ... She looks down - a GIANT LEATHERY FOOT is visible! She looks up into the murk ...

TEARS ROLL DOWN HER CHEEKS ...

The NATIVES suddenly go SILENT.

A SUDDEN PUFF OF WIND INSTANTLY CLEARS THE SMOKE ...

ANN'S EYES WIDEN ... Before her stands ...

KONG! ... a 25 foot SILVERBACK GORILLA. His fur is MATTED, ANCIENT SCARS mark his body - evidence of life and death struggles with unknown beasts. His face is AGED - SILVER HAIR predominant. He is resting on his KNUCKLES.

KONG rises on his hind legs and BEATS HIS CHEST ... ANN SCREAMS!!!

ALL the NATIVE'S launch into their piercing MONKEY SCREECH ... It WINDS KONG UP! He leans down, ROARING only inches from ANN'S FACE, then suddenly starts PACING FURIOUSLY from SIDE TO SIDE - like a caged animal. He ROARS at the NATIVES atop the WALL.

KONG suddenly CHARGES at the WOODEN GATE! He crashes against it, causing the ENTIRE WALL to SHUDDER violently ... A NATIVE loses his balance and topples off! He THUDS INTO THE GROUND at KONG'S FEET ... KONG quickly scoops him up and BITES HIS HEAD OFF in a PG 13 kinda way!

The NATIVES ROAR like spectators in a gladiator's arena ...

KONG charges aggressively at ANN ... The strength suddenly drains from her legs and she slumps between the pillars. KONG roughly snatches at ANN with his HUGE HAND and PULLS her free of the ALTAR.

THE NATIVES CHANT: "KONG ... KONG ... KONG"

SUDDENLY! BAM! BAM! BAM! NATIVES topple in a BURST OF GUNFIRE!

EXT. NATIVE CITY - NIGHT

JACK is leading the charge into the RUINED CITY! 20 SAILORS - armed with TOMMY GUNS and RIFLES - are blazing in all directions! The NATIVES flee in a MAD PANIC as JACK runs straight for the GATE.

He rushes up to a small OBSERVATION GRILL ...

JACK'S POV: KONG heading towards the JUNGLE, clutching ANN - she is SCREAMING and KICKING.

JACK
(yelling)
Ann!!!

KONG turns ... he and JACK make EYE CONTACT. KONG ROARS at JACK with DEFIANCE and disappears into the DARKNESS.

JACK turns back to the SAILORS ...

JACK
(urgent)
She's alive! Quick!

JACK backs away from the wall, and starts FIRING his TOMMY GUN at the BOLT securing the WOODEN GATE. OTHER SAILORS join in, SPLINTERING the TIMBERS in a HAIL OF LEAD.

All 20 SAILORS push the HUGE GATE and it slowly OPENS, exposing the JUNGLE beyond. DENHAM runs up, SWEATING AND PANTING.

DENHAM
Did you see her?

JACK
Yeah, I saw her ... she was carried into the jungle by ... an animal.

DENHAM
(worried)
What was it, Jack?

JACK HESITATES ...

JACK
An ape ... some kind of ape.

DENHAM sighs with relief ... He turns to the SAILORS.

DENHAM
(heroic)
Did you hear that, boys? We're looking for a monkey!

JACK
Englehorn - stay here with five men. Make sure this gate stays open. The rest of you, follow me!

ENGLEHORN BARKS out orders as the SAILORS organise themselves into pursuers and defenders. DENHAM signals HERB to join him with the CAMERA.

JACK grabs DENHAM'S ARM.

JACK
He ain't coming! We're not making a Goddamn movie here!

DENHAM
What's your problem, Jack? You get to save the girl and I get my third act!

DENHAM grabs HERB and pushes him past JACK ... JACK clearly decides to get on with the chase, rather than argue with DENHAM ... He strides through the GATES, signalling for the GROUP to follow ...

JACK
Single file - never lose sight of the man in front!

CUT TO:

EXT. SKULL ISLAND JUNGLE - NIGHT

Beyond the GREAT WALL, SKULL ISLAND is like no place you've ever seen before ...

The VOLCANIC ROCKS form a JAGGED, TORTURED LANDSCAPE of DEEP CREVASSES and TOWERING CLIFFS. The vegetation is THICK, the JUNGLE DARK. ANCIENT KNARLED TREES twist out of the ground, thick LICHEN and long MOSSES hang from branches and TANGLED VINES. STEAM RISES from festering SWAMPS ... DEEPER into the island, the steam is VOLCANIC - hissing out of FISSURES and BUBBLING MUD POOLS. The way light and contrast plays on the landscape is reminiscent of the etchings of 19th century artist Gustave Dore.

It is into this "Jurassic Park from Hell" that JACK leads DENHAM, HERB, KURT, O'BRIEN, COOPER, JOSH and TEN OTHER SAILORS. HERB is limping along with the heavy CAMERA & TRIPOD on his shoulder.

The ATMOSPHERE is TENSE ... Unseen CREATURES SCURRY in the darkness, fleeing from the approaching humans. The SAILORS are nervous, jumpy, SWEAT rolling down their brows.

DENHAM suddenly loses his footing and SPRAWLS ON THE GROUND ... his EYES WIDEN at the sight of the deep KONG FOOTPRINT he has just stepped in.

DENHAM
Holy shit! Look at the size of that!

JACK
That's your monkey, Denham.

DENHAM
(softly)
Kong ...

DENHAM'S EYES meet JACK'S - he is EXCITED. The SAILORS are worried ... everyone suddenly has their FINGERS ON THE TRIGGER, eyes nervously scanning the THICK JUNGLE.

A SUDDEN NOISE! Cracking BRANCHES ... heavy FOOTSTEPS ...

The SAILORS PANIC! The start FIRING in ALL DIRECTIONS, the flashes from TOMMY GUNS and RIFLES, blinding in the darkness.

JACK
(yelling)
Hey! stop! Cut it out!

SILENCE ... Smoke drifts away from the guns as the GROUP listens for SOUNDS ...

Like a pair of mighty trees being felled, Two DEAD prehistoric creatures - 30 foot tall LAMBEOSAURS - suddenly topple out of the gloomy foliage and THUD TO THE GROUND in front of the startled SAILORS!!

They warily approach the DEAD DINOSAURS ...

DENHAM
Hey! I thought these things were supposed to be extinct!

JACK
(dryly)
They are now.

JACK and the SAILORS look in awe at the bodies of the HUGE BEASTS. HERB starts ROLLING FILM as JACK pulls a LEAFY BRANCH out of a LAMBEOSAUR'S MOUTH.

JACK
They were just tasting the berries.

DENHAM
(grunts)
Yeah? ... Well, we gave 'em a taste of American lead ... and I don't see 'em coming back for seconds!

CUT TO:

EXT. NATURAL AMPHITHEATRE - NIGHT

KONG climbs down into a ROCKY HOLLOW - a vine-strewn natural AMPHITHEATRE. He DROPS ANN TO THE GROUND, and stands over her, poised on his knuckles.

ANN looks up at KONG ... She doesn't move ... He leans over her and ROARS! ANN suddenly scrambles to her feet and RUNS! Within seconds KONG has OVERTAKEN HER and blocked her path ... ANN turns and runs in the other direction. It is clear that KONG is playing CAT AND MOUSE.

ANN trips on something and falls over - A HUMAN RIBCAGE juts out of the MUDDY GROUND. ANN sobs as she SEES ALL AROUND: HUMAN BONES, some still encased in the remnants of BRIDAL DRESS and HEADWEAR ...

This place is KONG'S KILLING GROUND!

KONG scoops ANN up ... lifts her TOWARDS HIS MOUTH! She SCREAMS and struggles in his grip. His MOUTH OPENS and she KICKS and BEATS HIS FINGERS in a seemingly hopeless attempt to fight for her life.

Suddenly ... The NATIVE HEADDRESS FALLS OFF. Her LONG BLONDE HAIR cascades onto her shoulders.

KONG is STARTLED! He drops ANN ... she lies sprawled on the ground. KONG strides back and forth, SNARLING NERVOUSLY.

KONG tentatively reaches towards ANN'S HAIR with a HUGE FINGER, but PULLS HIS PAW AWAY at the last second ... SCARED BUT CAPTIVATED.

ANN sits ... MOTIONLESS and TERRIFIED.

KONG cautiously approaches ANN, LIFTING HER UP, holding her in his cupped hand ... He hesitantly STROKES THE BACK OF HER HEAD, like a child patting a kitten. KONG exposes HUGE TEETH and PINK GUMS in a NERVOUS GRIMACE.

ANN stays stocks still as KONG STROKES HER HAIR with increasing CONFIDENCE. He lets the GOLDEN LOCKS slip through his fingers.

SUDDENLY ... a SAVAGE HOWL echoes into the GROTTO from close by. KONG pulls ANN PROTECTIVELY to his chest, and DISAPPEARS into the DARK JUNGLE.

CUT TO:

EXT. SKULL ISLAND VISTA - DAWN

The SUN rises over the ROCKY CRAGS of SKULL MOUNTAIN.

EXT. PINNACLE VALLEY - MORNING

CLOSE ON: KONG'S FOOTPRINT ... in a SANDY dried-up stream bed. JACK looks up at the direction KONG has taken ...

The tracks head towards a SHEER CLIFF on the side of a NARROW, DRY VALLEY, an area deep in the heart of SKULL ISLAND, dominated by spectacular PINNACLES of STONE, jutting out of the ground like giant fingers. The VALLEY is less than 75 feet wide, flanked by sheer, seemingly unscalable cliffs.

JACK wipes the sweat from his brow, looking for a possible route up the cliff. Further down the valley, DENHAM and the SAILORS are grouped around the camera ...

CLOSE ON: An ANKYLOSAUR is being PELTED WITH STONES ...

HERB is filming, whilst DENHAM and the SAILORS try to coax some action out of the slow-witted, cow-sized DINOSAUR ... It staggers around in confusion.

DENHAM
(frustrated)
People'll think it's a Goddamn guy in a suit!

DENHAM suddenly gets an idea ...

DENHAM (CONT'D)
Hey! I gotta great idea! We could turn this place into a huge amusement park! Sorta like Coney Island with dinosaurs!
(excited)
It's a goldmine! I'll cut you boys in for twenty percent! We're gonna be rich!

The SAILORS voice their APPROVAL.

JACK (O.S)
(yelling)
Hey!

JACK is yelling from up the valley, waving for the group to join him.

JACK (CONT'D)
(yelling)
This way! Come on!

DENHAM frowns at JACK.

DENHAM
Let's keep this between ourselves ... assholes are not included!

The SAILORS LAUGH.

AT THAT MOMENT ... The GROUND TREMBLES!

The SAILORS look around - ALARMED. JACK almost loses his footing as the ground under him literally BOUNCES. He looks up the WINDING VALLEY ...

A DUST CLOUD suddenly spills out from around the next corner ... immediately followed by the BREATHTAKING SIGHT of a herd of TWELVE BRONTOSAURS, RUNNING in a WILD PANIC, down the narrow valley!! A PACK of 15 CARNOTAURS - 9 foot tall MEATEATERS - are PURSUING THEM.

Spectacular TRACKING SHOT: With the STAMPEDE ... A CARNOTAURUS leaps onto the back of a FLEEING BRONTOSAUR, causing it to falter and slide against the cliff. TWO MORE CARNOTAURS leap onto the ailing BRONTOSAUR as the rest of the pack stream past.

JACK turns and starts running! The STAMPEDING DINOSAURS are stretched across the valley behind him, less than fifty yards away and closing! JACK runs down the rocky slope towards DENHAM and the SAILORS - who seem to be frozen in fear!

JACK
(yelling)
Run!

EVERYONE TURNS and FLEES! GUNS and EQUIPMENT are abandoned ... HERB hoists the TRIPOD & CAMERA on his shoulder and limps after the others!

JACK is running as fast as he can ... he glances over his shoulder - the WALL of THUNDERING BRONTOSAUR LEGS are about to ENGULF HIM! JACK changes direction slightly, to make sure he is BETWEEN DINOSAURS ... They overtake JACK and he suddenly finds himself in a SEA of HUGE LEGS - like wildly pounding Redwood trees! The CARNOTAURS are snapping and snarling at the LEGS ... They see JACK! His only hope of survival is too stay WITHIN THE STAMPEDE, out of reach of the MEATEATERS!

DENHAM is running faster than the others! He is way ahead, still clutching his TOMMY GUN ... as the STAMPEDE engulfs the SAILORS.

QUICK IMAGES: 15 SAILORS in the SEA OF LEGS ... A SAILOR trips and is CRUSHED UNDER FOOT. A COUPLE OF SAILORS jump clear of the BRONTOSAURS - only to be set on by the CARNOTAURS. JACK ... HERB ... SAILORS, everyone is running madly, dodging BRONTOSAURS, CARNTAURS and trying not to trip!

A CARNOTAUR focuses on JACK ... It skillfully weaves IN BETWEEN and UNDER BRONTOSAURS and emerges right behind JACK, it's SNAPPING JAWS inches away from his head! JACK suddenly SIDE-STEPS, bringing the CARNOTAUR right along side ... he SHOULDER-BARGES it SIDEWAYS - under a BRONTOSAUR'S LEGS. The CARNOTAUR is instantly trampled!

DENHAM is managing to stay ahead of the stampede - possiblity RUNNING FASTER than any human before him! A CARNOTAUR races out in front of the stampede and bears down on DENHAM with incredible speed! DENHAM desperately waves the TOMMY GUN back towards the CARNOTAUR ... TOWARDS THE STAMPEDE!

JACK sees it coming ...

JACK
(yelling)
NO!!!

DENHAM FIRES, missing the CARNOTAUR ...

... but he hits the LEAD BRONTOSAUR in the chest. The BRONTOSAUR COLLAPSES AT FULL SPEED! It CARTWHEELS OVER, it's huge NECK and TAIL thrashing out. The OTHER BRONTOSAURS PLOUGH INTO IT, tripping and rolling!

JACK and the SAILORS suddenly find themselves in the middle of an amazing FLESHY FREIGHT TRAIN PILE-UP! SAILORS are crushed as BRONTOSAURS come down on top of them! A CARNOTAUR is squashed when TWO BRONTOSAURS slam together.

JACK throws himself onto the ground, rolling against a rock as MOUNTAINS of BRONTOSAUR TUMBLE all around him.

In the space of seconds, the MIGHTY HERD of BEHEMOTHS is reduced to a VAST PILE of DEAD or WOUNDED ANIMALS ... The CARNOTAURS immediately go to work, leaping onto BRONTOSAURS, ripping into fleshy stomachs.

Amazingly JACK, HERB and at least 9 SAILORS have survived ... however, they must now escape from the blood crazed MEATEATERS.

JACK crawls past huge HEAVING BELLYS and TWITCHING LEGS ... he looks around for some escape route ... He spots DENHAM - desperately scrambling up a steep rocky slope. It leads to a narrow fissure in the cliff - a possible way out.

JACK staggers out of the DINOSAUR PILE-UP ... he turns back at the SOUND OF LOUD HISSING - A CARNOTAURUS is climbing over a DEAD BRONTOSAUR, intent on JACK ... he can do nothing! The CARNOTAURUS leaps ...

BAM! BAM! BAM! The CARNOTAURUS is suddenly riddled with BULLETS and falls DEAD at JACK'S FEET!

KURT hurries towards JACK clutching his TOMMY GUN!

KURT
Go Jack! Quick!

JACK waves at SURVIVING SAILORS that are emerging from the PILE-UP.

JACK
(yelling)
This way!

SURVIVING SAILORS scramble past JACK and head up the steep slope. By some miracle, HERB limps out of the PILE-UP, covered in DUST - but still carrying the CAMERA & TRIPOD on his shoulders!

KURT blasts at a CARNOTAURUS - it TOPPLES BACKWARDS. He turns to JACK ...

KURT
Go Jack!

JACK heads up the slope. KURT backs away ... TWO CARNOTAURS suddenly charge at him. He fires the TOMMY GUN, shredding them with bullets, but cannot react fast enough when a THIRD ATTACKS from the other direction!

KURT SCREAMS BRIEFLY as he falls to the ground, under CLAWING FEET and SNAPPING JAWS.

The FOUR SURVIVING CARNOTAURS head up the slope!

JACK
Hurry!

JACK and the OTHERS are desperately scrambling up the STEEP SHALE SLOPE - LOOSE STONES that are impossible to get a grip on ... SAILORS start sliding backwards in their panic. The CARNOTAURS are sliding too, but their powerful legs are working furiously, propelling them closer and closer to the flailing SAILORS!

A SAILOR loses his footing completely ... he rolls past TWO CARNOTAURS before being grabbed by the JAWS of THE THIRD.

The SAILORS grab hold of WEEDS, ROCKS ... ANYTHING, to get away from the DINOSAURS. They move into a network of NARROW FISSURES between PINNACLES ... The CARNOTAURS can barely squeeze through.

ONE SAILOR is trying to escape up a sheer rock face ... he slips and falls back into the CARNOTAUR'S CLUTCHES.

The SAILORS REACH SAFETY ... a narrow fissure - too small for the CARNOTAURS - leads into STEAMY JUNGLE beyond the VALLEY. JACK looks back ...

HERB is struggling, a CARNOTAURUS snapping at his heels. JACK climbs back down the slope to help pull him up. The CARNOTAURUS lunges at HERB, grabbing his FOOT in it's JAWS! HERB screams and rolls over on his back, the camera on his chest. The CARNOTAUR is CRUSHING HIS ANKLE between it's TEETH!... Luckily it's HERB'S ARTIFICAL LEG!

Another CARNOTAUR is scrambling up behind the first ... JACK rushes forward, scooping up a LARGE BOULDER. He smashes it down on the CARNOTAUR'S head! It releases HERB'S FOOT and rolls away down the slope, collecting it's BUDDY on the way!

JACK and another COUPLE OF SAILORS grab HERB and the CAMERA GEAR and scramble to SAFETY through the FISSURE.

EXT. EDGE OF SWAMP - DAY

JACK, DENHAM, PEEK, HERB and the 7 surviving SAILORS are a bedraggled GROUP ... CUT, BRUISED, COVERED in DUST, SOAKED in SWEAT. Most of the GUNS are lost. They collapse into a NARROW CLEARING on the edge of a MISTY SWAMP-LIKE LAKE.

JACK rushes to the WATER'S EDGE, TRANSFIXED ...

KONG is visible across the wide swamp, maybe 150 yards away ... he is CARRYING ANN.

DENHAM
(awestruck)
Jesus Christ.

KONG disappears from sight. JACK is driven with urgency ... Cliffs rise out of the swamp on both sides of the beach - the only way forward is ACROSS. DEAD TREES jut out of the water ... some have fallen onto the shore.

JACK
Strap the trees together ... build rafts. Hurry! Denham!

The SAILORS set to work. DENHAM continues staring across the swamp.

DENHAM
(softly)
How are we gonna kill that thing?

CUT TO:

EXT. JUNGLE GLADE - DAY

A PACK OF UTAHRAPTORS are feasting on a DINOSAUR CARCASS, intent on stripping every last piece of flesh off the bones. A RAPTOR suddenly looks up, alarmed by a NOISE ...

WHACK! KONG'S FIST smashes down on his head, KNOCKING HIM OUT! The other RAPTORS turn to flee ...

WHACK! KONG'S FOOT stamps down on another RAPTOR ... He grabs another by the head, SNAPPING IT'S NECK with a quick flick. ANN is held to his chest, looking FRIGHTENED and EXHAUSTED.

The surviving RAPTORS scurry into the JUNGLE ... KONG sits down, and starts eating the DEAD RAPTORS like someone with a KFC craving!

As he snacks, KONG holds ANN UPSIDE DOWN and JIGGLES HER, watching fascinated as her HAIR swishes around in the SUNLIGHT. KONG leans back against a tree. He places ANN on his CHEST, prodding curiously at her ... ANN loses her balance, sliding onto the ground with a THUD! KONG clumsily scoops her back onto his chest.

KONG'S actions give us the sense of a toddler playing roughly with a favorite toy.

ANN slides off KONG'S chest again and falls 15 feet to the ground. He gropes for her ... this time, she scrambles under his arm and RACES INTO THE JUNGLE!

EXT. THICK JUNGLE - DAY

ANN runs hard, not daring to look back as the SOUNDS of KONG'S ANGRY ROAR echo behind her. She ducks BRANCHES and leaps LOGS, running into THICKER and THICKER jungle.

WOOD SPLINTERS and TREES CRASH as KONG pursues ANN, but clearly the DENSE JUNGLE is slowing him up.

ANN leaps down a STEEP BANK, sliding and rolling over FLAX bushes.

EXT. LUSH GROTTO - DAY

ANN tumbles into a LUSH GROTTO ... a SUDDEN HISS - A RAPTOR snarls at her! ANN races away from it, running across a CLEARING covered by SPECTACULAR TROPICAL FLOWERS. She stumbles, landing on a BED OF SPONGY VINES. ANN looks back fearfully, expecting the RAPTOR to strike ...

The RAPTOR is less than 6 feet behind ANN, but it has lost interest in her - instead it is desperately clawing at the ground, trying to scramble clear of the SPONGY VINES as they UNDULATE around it's feet!

ANN gasps as the VINES suddenly SEPARATE beneath her. She falls ...

INT. PLANT CHAMBER - DAY

... into a LARGE ORGANIC PLANT CHAMBER! A desperate grab onto a squirming VINE is the only thing that stops her falling further. She dangles 5 feet above a CESSPOOL of DIGESTIVE PLANT ACIDS - in what is obviously a hideous CARNIVOROUS PLANT ... some kind of cross between a Venus Fly Trap and a Pitcher Plant, but of a size designed to devour small dinosaurs!

With a HISSING SCREAM, the RAPTOR slides past ANN into the ACIDIC MORASS below ... ANN watches horrified as the RAPTOR thrashes wildly. BARBED Cactus-like SPINES emerge from the body of the plant, impaling the squirming RAPTOR as ACIDIC DIGESTIVE JUICES liquify it's body. OTHER DINOSAUR SKELETONS are visible in the churning CESSPOOL.

ANN clings onto the vine, however the plant is clearly aware of her presence ... ANEMONE-like TENDRILS claw at the air around ANN'S feet ... The VINE is lowering her slowly towards the deadly heart of the plant ...

WHITE VISCOUS FIBRES suddenly spit out of the sides of the PLANT CHAMBER, covering ANN in a COBWEB-LIKE FILM. Her breath becomes labored ... Her grip on the vine weakens ... ANN FALLS!

KONG'S mighty HAND catches her - inches above the ACIDIC CESSPOOL - and lifts her out of the PLANT CHAMBER!

EXT. LUSH GROTTO - DAY

ANN rises high into the air in KONG'S hand ... she gasps for air as the VISCOUS FIBRES still incase her body.

KONG wades through the KILLER PLANTS ... The BEAUTIFUL TROPICAL FLOWERS transform into SNAPPING CARNIVOROUS MOUTHS, attacking KONG ... he effortlessly rips them away as he reaches the safety of the JUNGLE.

ANN hangs MOTIONLESS in KONG'S hand ... He frantically pulls at the VISCOUS COBWEB, ripping it away. He shakes ANN - she is floppy like a RAG DOLL ... her eyes are open, but she doesn't respond as if PARALYZED.

INSERT: ANN'S distorted, fevered, POV of KONG.

KONG desperately LICKS at her face, attempting to clean away the last of the VISCOUS FIBRES. She lolls limply in his hand.

KONG - looking as close to PANIC as we will ever see - BOUNDS into the JUNGLE.

EXT. JUNGLE/LOG CHASM - DAY

ANN'S POV ... upside down shot WHIPPING through FOLIAGE with long LOPING STRIDES.

ANN swings from KONG'S HAND as he POWERS THROUGH the JUNGLE at HIGH SPEED. Her EYES GLAZING, SWEAT DRIPPING from her brow.

KONG races across a DEEP, NARROW CHASM - spanned by a HUGE FALLEN TREE, creating a LOG BRIDGE.

ANN'S POV ... becomes MORE FEVERED, as FOLIAGE BLURS PAST CAMERA.

CUT TO:

EXT. SWAMP - DAY

TWO MAKESHIFT RAFTS drift silently across the surface of the SWAMPY LAKE. HERB, JOSH and 4 SAILORS are in the first - they look TERRIFIED, JACK, DENHAM and 3 SAILORS in the second.

JACK is punting his raft along using a LONG BRANCH. The SWAMP is creepy ... DEAD TWISTED TREES stick out of the surface ... a thin film of FOG hangs in the air. SMALL FLYING LIZARD-type things flit about from tree to tree.

The first raft reaches the SHORE - a narrow SANDY BEACH leading into GLOOMY DENSE JUNGLE.

JACK and DENHAM'S RAFT is still 20 yards off shore.

DENHAM
(yelling)
Set up the camera, Herb! I want a shot of us reaching the shore!

JACK
Forget it, Denham ... the poor guy's half-dead.

JOSH is hugging his knees ... trembling.

JOSH
(scared)
I wanna go back to the ship.

DENHAM
Shut up, you chicken-shit! Roll camera!

DENHAM suddenly stands up, causing the unstable raft to ROCK in the water.

DENHAM
Give me the pole, Driscoll!

JACK puts the TIP OF THE POLE against DENHAM'S CHEST and PUSHES HIM DOWN.

JACK
(threatening)
Sit down and keep your mouth shut!

DENHAM has the look of a man close to BREAKDOWN ... he SPRINGS towards JACK, nearly tipping the raft over! DENHAM snatches the POLE as JACK tries to balance the RAFT.

DENHAM
(yelling)
I've had it with you giving orders, flyboy!

DENHAM swings the POLE at JACK, missing ... JACK and the SAILORS cling on as it ROCKS VIOLENTLY! DENHAM swings the pole, again and again, growing more FRANTIC. He starts HYPERVENTILATING ... JACK rolls away from each blow.

JACK sees a ROW OF BUBBLES moving rapidly towards the RAFT!

JACK
(alarmed)
Denham!

HIGH ANGLE: Looking down on the RAFT ... THREE HUGE SHAPES glide in the MURK below the surface of the SWAMP. They RISE beneath the RAFT ...

TIPPING IT OVER!

EXT. BENEATH WATER - DAY

The SWAMP is about 8 ft deep ... The JACK, DENHAM and the THREE SAILORS fall STRAIGHT TO THE BOTTOM as if weighted.

STRINGY 5 foot WEEDS rise from the bottom like tentacles. JACK looks around ... the WATER is DARK and MURKY. The SAILORS are trying to kick back up to the SURFACE, with no luck ... for some reason this water has zero buoyancy.

SUDDENLY a TERRIFYING CREATURE emerges from the gloom! It is some kind of PREHISTORIC AXOLOTL-type thing with WIDE TEETH. It is about 25 foot long - the size of a huge White Shark.

With a frightening grace, the AXOLOTL sweeps a SAILOR up in it's JAWS!

TWO MORE giant AXOLOTL'S glide out of the gloom! ANOTHER SAILOR tries to run, but is taken by the SECOND AXOLOTL.

The third AXOLOTL comes straight at JACK! He throws himself down, and the CREATURE glides over the top of him. JACK gets back on his feet - he does the only thing he can to escape - run for the shore along the swamp bed.

JACK pushes through the THICK FOREST of WEED, his cheeks bulging as he struggles to retain his air. Suddenly something GRABS HIS ANKLE!

JACK looks down at DENHAM ... he is desperately clinging onto JACK'S FOOT! An AXOLOTL suddenly sweeps by, causing JACK to duck. He grabs DENHAM'S arm and starts dragging him through the WEEDS.

EXT. SWAMP BEACH - DAY

JACK and DENHAM stagger onto the beach. SAILORS pull them clear of the water ... the other SAILOR survivor from the raft crawls onto the beach too. HERB has his tripod set up and is filming it all.

JACK is gasping for air ... DENHAM lies moaning.

SUDDENLY! An AXOLOTL ROCKETS OUT OF THE WATER! These things have legs and it scuttles towards the GROUP with incredible speed! Within seconds it has grabbed the SAILOR survivor in it's JAWS and disappears back into the swamp!

ANOTHER AXOLOTL charges out of the swamp! It comes straight at HERB, who has no choice but to abandon his CAMERA and quickly back away ... The AXOLOTL lunges at the CAMERA & TRIPOD, SWALLOWING IT with one gulp!

BAM! BAM! BAM! JOSH blasts the AXOLOTL with his TOMMY GUN. It slumps to the ground DEAD ... it's mouth hanging open.

There is a stoney silence as DENHAM lurches to his feet. He GLARES AT HERB ...

DENHAM
(yelling)
You lost my camera! You idiot!

TEARS well in HERB'S eyes ... the man is deeply hurt by this criticism.

HERB
I'll be pleased to cash in my life insurance, Mr Denham. Buy you a new one, sir.

DENHAM
(yelling)
I don't want a new camera! Herb ... I want you to crawl into the fish and recover my equipment!

HERB silently removes his jacket and cap ... he takes his glasses off and puts them in his pocket. He crawls into the mouth of the AXOLOTL ... DENHAM holds his feet and PUSHES HIM DOWN the CREATURE'S THROAT.

HERB
(muffled)
Just a bit further, Mr Denham ...

DENHAM
Have you got it?

DENHAM pushes him further in ... only his knees are sticking out of the AXOLOTL'S MOUTH ... The creature's TORSO BULGES GROTESQUELY as HERB suddenly PANICS!

HERB
(muffled panic)
It's still breathing! I can feel it breathing!

DENHAM
Have you got the camera?

HERB
(muffled terror)
Pull me out, sir! Pull me out!

AT THAT MOMENT ...

The AXOLOTL'S JAWS CLAMP SHUT! It was ONLY STUNNED!!!

A MUFFLED SCREAM emits from DEEP INSIDE the creature as it REARS UP.

DENHAM
Holy shit!!!

The AXOLOTL PULLS AWAY, and VANISHES INTO THE WATER!

DENHAM turns back to the SHOCKED GROUP ... he is holding HERB'S ARTIFICAL LEG. He thrusts the LEG at a SAILOR.

DENHAM
Make sure this gets back to his wife and kids.

CUT TO:

EXT. JUNGLE GLADE - NIGHT

ANN'S FEVERED POV: A NIGHTMARISH MONTAGE of SURREAL KONG STATUES ... of LORD DARROW with a SKELETAL HEAD ... of SCREAMING NATIVES ... of FIERY CARVED FACES ... and finally of KONG'S EYES - looking at her with CONCERN.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. JUNGLE GLADE - DAWN

CLOSE ON ... ANN. She opens her eyes, looking rested and calm - it is clear that her fever has passed.

WIDER ... ANN is lying in a BED OF SOFT GRASS. KONG sits beside her on his haunches - a PROTECTIVE GIANT, staring into the JUNGLE for any sign of danger.

ANN slowly sits up ... KONG realises she's awake! He reacts with behaviour that shows RELIEF and DELIGHT ... He thumps the ground and pulls his lips back in a silent scream ... rising quickly to his feet, KONG paces back and forth across the GLADE, patting his chest - all the time stealing quick glances at ANN, as if to reassure himself that she's watching.

ANN gets to her feet - but she is weak and suddenly doubles over with a hacking DRY COUGH.

KONG shows ALARM ... he hurriedly leans over a SMALL STREAM that bisects the pretty GLADE, and scoops up a HANDFUL of WATER. In a couple of paces he reaches ANN and clumsily DOUSES HER WITH WATER! KONG steps back nervously to survey the results - the REMAINING WATER cupped in his hand.

ANN looks up, peering through strands of wet, bedraggled HAIR. She points at KONG'S hand and GESTURES for him to come closer. He tentatively offers his OUT-STRETCHED HAND.

ANN DRINKS thirstily from his CUPPED HAND. She slumps back on GRASS BED.

KONG suddenly turns away and DISAPPEARS into the JUNGLE, leaving ANN sitting nervously alone ...

EXT. THICK JUNGLE - DAWN

LOW ANGLE ... Looking up at the TREES SMASHED by KONG as he pursued ANN.

JACK glances at the FOOTPRINTS in the mud and hurries back into the THICK JUNGLE.

EXT. JUNGLE CAMPSITE - DAWN

DENHAM, JOSH, O'BRIEN, COOPER and the 3 OTHER SURVIVING SAILORS are huddled around a CAMPFIRE, talking. It is clear that they have camped the night here.

JACK emerges into the clearing.

JACK
Let's go! I found tracks heading north.

DENHAM
Yeah? Well, we're heading south - back to the ship.

JACK
What?

DENHAM stands, faces JACK ...

DENHAM
Show's over. We've had enough.

JACK looks disbelievingly at the OTHER SAILORS, but NOBODY meets his eye ... JOSH prods the fire.

JACK
He's close. We could catch him in two, maybe three hours.

DENHAM
The girl's dead, Driscoll.

JACK
She's not dead - your movie's dead. That's the problem. You've lost your Goddamn camera ... you've lost your Goddamn nerve!

DENHAM
You stupid schmuck! You're in love with her!

JACK pauses for a moment ...

JACK
(softly)
Maybe I am.

DENHAM
Too late, Driscoll - she's found herself a real man!

A couple of SAILORS stiffle a LAUGH.

JACK
Fuck you, Denham. Who's with me?

The SAILORS remain silent ... JOSH glances at JACK.

JOSH
(uncomfortable)
I'm scared, Jack ... I don't wanna die.

JACK slowly nods.

JACK
(gently)
That's ok, Josh.

Without another word, JACK turns and heads back into the JUNGLE ... ALONE.

EXT. JUNGLE GLADE - MORNING

ANN stands in the JUNGLE GLADE ... she glances nervously around as ANIMAL NOISES echo out of the JUNGLE from various directions.

A sudden LOUD SPLINTERING CRASH makes ANN spin around ... as KONG steps into the GLADE. He throws a BLOODY RIPPED LEG of some freshly killed DINOSAUR down at her feet! KONG sits back, looking very pleased with himself.

ANN looks aghast at the OFFERING as KONG eats the rest of the DINOSAUR with a certain amount of RELISH. She backs away from the MEAT ... KONG leans forward and pushes it closer to her. ANN steps away and SHAKES HER HEAD.

ANN
No ... thank you.

KONG SHAKES HIS HEAD as if mimicking her! He quickly retreats back into the JUNGLE ... ANN loses sight of KONG, but watches bemused as TREES SHAKE and CRASH while he hunts around for something.

KONG quickly emerges back into the clearing ... he holding a TINY OBJECT between his THUMB and FOREFINGER. With great DELICACY, he drops a RIPE MANGO at ANN'S FEET! ANN bites into it, suddenly realising how hungry she actually is.

ANN
(eating)
Good! More? More?

KONG acts COYLY at this praise ... he rushes out of the GLADE again ...

... returning in moments with the ENTIRE MANGO TREE, which he drops at ANN'S feet!

EXT. LOG CHASM - DAY

POV: KONG in the distance ... ANN is fleetingly visible through the THICK UNDERGROWTH.

JACK peers out from behind a bush ... KONG is about 150 feet away, on the other side of the NARROW CHASM, spanned by the LOG BRIDGE.

JACK hurries towards the LOG BRIDGE, carefully staying low and ducking from bush to bush.

The CHASM is deep, maybe 100 feet to the bottom - a DARK VINE ENTANGLED PIT. JACK carefully starts to cross the LOG BRIDGE ... it is covered in wet moss and quite slippery. He is totally vulnerable ... He watches KONG carefully, but the Gorilla is seemingly focussed on ANN.

JACK is over halfway across when KONG casually GLANCES IN HIS DIRECTION ... JACK throws himself forward on the log, trying to stay out of sight behind a bulky lichen covered STUMP.

CUT TO:

EXT. JUNGLE NEST - MORNING

DENHAM, JOSH, O'BRIEN, COOPER and the 2 OTHER SAILORS are warily moving through the JUNGLE, scanning the undergrowth. DENHAM clambers down a bank ...

DENHAM

Aw, shit!

DENHAM has stepped into a NEST of LARGE DINOSAUR EGGS ... he stands ANKLE DEEP in BROKEN SHELLS and EMBRYONIC FLUID.

DENHAM (CONT'D)

Goddamn it!

DENHAM angrily TRAMPLES the last UNBROKEN EGGS. O'BRIEN stands on the bank above the nest.

O'BRIEN

Must be some mighty big chickens around here!

AT THAT MOMENT ... O'BRIEN winces as A LARGE HORN emerges out of his CHEST! He is LIFTED into the air by a grief stricken COW TRICERATOPS!

AN ANGUISHED BELLOW! WHIP PAN: onto 3 more TRICERATOPS, including a LARGE BULL, ROARING in ANGER as they lumber towards the NEST!

The SAILORS react with horror as the TRICERATOPS CHARGE! ... They move with surprising speed ... HUGE HORNS lowered for the kill!

BAM! BAM! BAM! DENHAM fires, but the bullets RICOCHET off the TRICERATOP'S BONEY FRILL that surrounds it's head!

The GROUP turns and flees into the JUNGLE!

EXT. LOG CHASM - DAY

JACK reacts with ALARM at the SOUNDS of the SAILOR'S YELLS and BELLOWING TRICERATOPS ... they are heading in his direction! He steals a worried look back over the stump at KONG ...

EXT. JUNGLE GLADE - DAY

DRAMATIC PUSH IN: As KONG reacts to the approaching CACOPHONY. He SNARLS ... and scoops ANN up, placing her HIGH in the BRANCHES OF A DEAD TREE, some 30 foot above the JUNGLE GLADE.

KONG bounds away towards the LOG CHASM!

EXT. LOG CHASM - DAY

JACK has no time to get off the LOG BRIDGE as KONG towers up over him!

KONG snarls at JACK, as if confronting his rival for ANN'S heart ... KONG suddenly leans across the BRIDGE, SWIPING at JACK!

JACK has to throw himself down as KONG'S HAND swots at him ... He rolls sideways to avoid another blow, this time clinging to vines to prevent a fall into the chasm!

AT THAT MOMENT ... DENHAM rushes out of the JUNGLE, followed by the SAILORS and 3 ANGRY TRICERATOPS! A SAILOR trips and is immediately ENGORGED by a TRICERATOP'S HORN!

DENHAM charges onto the LOG in a blind panic, followed by JOSH, COOPER and the last SAILOR ... The leading TRICERATOPS cannot stop in time and slides over the edge of the CHASM, legs desperately clawing at the air!

DENHAM almost collides with JACK on the middle of the LOG BRIDGE ... A SHADOW passes over them ... DENHAM screams as he realises KONG is standing on the other side of the CHASM!

KONG beats his chest, ROARING FIERCELY ... The MEN are trapped on the LOG BRIDGE between the 2 enraged TRICERATOPS on one side and the enraged KONG on the other!

KONG reaches down and LIFTS his end of the LOG BRIDGE. JACK, DENHAM and the 3 OTHERS cling on for dear life ... as KONG vigorously TWISTS and SHAKES the LOG, bucking the MEN into the air. DENHAM has his TOMMY GUN, but is too busy hanging onto the LOG to use it. JACK manages to grip onto the STUMP, but behind him SAILORS are FALLING OFF!

BOTTOM OF CHASM: SAILORS PLUMMET to the bottom ... ONE SAILOR crunches onto rocks, but COOPER and JOSH have their falls broken by a THICK NETWORK of VINES, and appear to land relatively UNHURT.

JACK and DENHAM cling on ... KONG ROARS with FRUSTRATION at JACK ... and HURLS the ENTIRE LOG into the CHASM!

DENHAM manages to LEAP ONTO VINES hanging from the far bank, but JACK RIDES THE LOG DOWN!

CRASH! The LOG SMASHES INTO THE ROCKS and JACK flies off it ... He bounces off vines and lands on the ground, STUNNED. The DEAD TRICERATOPS lies nearby.

COOPER is crawling along the ground with a SPRAINED ANKLE ... JOSH helps JACK to his feet. JACK suddenly pulls JOSH away from the TRICERATOPS' CARCASS ... The creature's STOMACH is BULGING and HEAVING GROTESQUELY!

JACK and JOSH flinch with horror as the TRICERATOPS' STOMACH RIPS OPEN and a HUGE 6 foot CARNIVOROUS MAGGOT-THING squirms out! It crawls hungrily towards JACK and JOSH!

SUDDENLY!!! A ROUND DIRT LID - larger than a manhole cover - POPS OPEN and a HUGE TRAPDOOR SPIDER DARTS OUT!! It grabs COOPER and drags him SCREAMING into it's LAIR, the LID neatly closing again!!

All around, MONSTROSITIES OF NATURE emerge from DANK BURROWS and crawl towards JACK and JOSH ... These are HUGE INSECTILE THINGS - combinations of SPIDERS, CRABS, MANTISES and CENTIPEDES!

JACK snatches up a LONG STICK and uses it like a SPEAR to fend these CREATURES off. He looks on helplessly as JOSH breaks away and runs towards the CHASM WALL.

JACK
Josh ... NO!

JOSH attempts to CLIMB THE WALL, but some BLIND TAPE WORM-THING reaches out of it's burrow and bites his leg. INSECT-THINGS descend on him !

A GROUP of SPIDERS with 7 foot LEG SPANS close in on JACK! Behind them hangs a LONG VINE, leading directly up to the top of the CHASM ... JACK charges at the SPIDERS, LEAPING as HIGH as he can. He lands on the BACK of the FIRST SPIDER, and using the bounce, he GRABS HOLD OF THE VINE, pulling himself away from the OTHER FRENZIED SPIDERS!

JACK is climbing HAND OVER HAND ...

SUDDENLY! He starts RISING FAST ...

KONG is perched on the EDGE of the CHASM, pulling the VINE up ... like a FISHERMAN reeling in a CATCH!!

JACK is HELPLESS!!

EXT. JUNGLE GLADE - DAY

ANN looks around FEARFULLY from her PERCH - HIGH in the BRANCHES of the ROTTEN TREE ... she has heard the SCREAMS, but has seen nothing.

A HUGE SHAPE moves beneath her ... ANN freezes at the sight of an ALLOSAUR entering the clearing. This is a 25 foot tall MEATEATER - SKULL ISLAND'S most fearsome predator! The ALLOSAUR snatches a DEAD RAPTOR off the ground and crunches it in POWERFUL JAWS ... It pauses, as if SNIFFING. The ALLOSAURS head is only a FEW FEET below ANN ... she is too scared to breathe!

The ALLOSAUR suddenly looks up ... straight at ANN! He immediately CIRCLES THE TREE in big powerful strides ... ANN shifts her position to keep the ALLOSAUR in sight ... it is clearly getting very AGITATED!

With an almost delicate movement, the ALLOSAUR nudges the TRUNK with it's head ... the TREE lurches dramatically! ANN hangs on desperately ... The ALLOSAUR pushes HARDER, sending the tree TOPPLING TO THE GROUND!

ANN rolls away from the tree, jumps to her feet and RUNS!!

She races through the JUNGLE, dodging TREES, leaping over FALLEN LOGS, smashing through BUSHES ... The ALLOSAUR POUNDING AFTER HER! It's BREATH RASPING ... FOOTSTEPS THUMPING. The HUGE JAWS open - only INCHES FROM ANN'S HEAD!

SHE SCREAMS!

EXT. LOG CHASM - DAY

KONG has almost REELED JACK IN when he hears ANN'S SCREAM.

He immediately DROPS THE VINE, sending JACK PLUMMETING back down the CHASM! Fortunately the COILS of LOOSE VINE at the top of the chasm TANGLE, stopping JACK with a jerk about HALF WAY DOWN.

KONG RUSHES OFF towards the SOUNDS of ANN'S SCREAMS.

EXT. DENSE JUNGLE - DAY

ANN is stumbling ... the ALLOSAUR positions it's HEAD for the FINAL LUNGE - JAWS OPEN ...

From out of the DENSE JUNGLE - KONG CHARGES! He meets ANN and the ALLOSAUR HEAD-ON at FULL SPEED! KONG swings his fist, smashing into the ALLOSAUR'S HEAD ... ANN has to throw herself against a tree as the DINOSAUR SPRAWLS onto the ground beside her ... In a flash, KONG is ON TOP of the ALLOSAUR, POUNDING HIS FIST DOWN ...

The ALLOSAUR lies still ... ANN'S legs turn to jelly and she COLLAPSES. KONG is clearly startled ... he gently takes her in his hand ...

AT THAT MOMENT! The SECOND ALLOSAUR ATTACKS!!! He comes charging into shot, grabbing KONG'S ARM in his JAWS! KONG ROARS, ripping free just as the THIRD ALLOSAUR strides into the CLEARING! The FIRST ALLOSAUR scrambles back to it's feet! KONG holds ANN protectively as he braces himself for the FIGHT OF HIS LIFE. The THREE ALLOSAURS CIRCLE around him.

THEY ATTACK KONG and ANN! ... What follows is a BREATHTAKING FIGHT TO THE DEATH. KONG fights like a madman ... not only does he have to do battle with the ALLOSAURS, he is also PROTECTING ANN - constantly transferring her from ONE HAND to THE OTHER as the ALLOSAURS SNAP AT HER throughout.

KONG punches and smashes with his fists, but he also uses wrestling-style headlocks and flips ... for a brief moment, ANN rolls free on the ground and has to dodge 25 foot DINOSAURS and the GORILLA, as the frenzied fight THUNDERS all around her.

The FIRST ALLOSAUR is taken out when KONG PULLS a LARGE JAGGED TREE TRUNK out of the ground and RAMS IT into the ALLOSAUR'S MOUTH, PUSHING it out the BACK OF IT'S HEAD!

The SECOND ALLOSAUR he kills by grabbing it in a HEADLOCK, FLIPPING it over his shoulder, but REVERSING DIRECTION suddenly - BREAKING IT'S BACK with a sickening CRUNCH!

ANN is suddenly GRABBED by the LAST ALLOSAUR! She is taken in his JAWS ... It BITES DOWN - JUST as KONG GRABS HIS JAWS in BOTH HANDS. He rolls the ALLOSAUR onto it's back, ANN still wedged in it's MOUTH! KONG desperately uses all his strength to force the ALLOSAUR'S MOUTH OPEN ... ANN is RELEASED and rolls onto the ground.

KONG forces the JAWS OPEN until they RIP APART at the HINGE! The ALLOSAUR sprawls back DEAD.

KONG is PANTING HEAVILY ... he has been BITEN, RAKED and CUT. He puts his foot on the LAST ALLOSAUR and BEATS HIS CHEST TRIUMPHANTLY!

KONG hears ANN SOBBING ... he carefully picks her up and HURRIES deeper into the JUNGLE.

EXT. LOG CHASM - DAY

JACK pulls himself onto the TOP OF THE CHASM ... He rolls on the ground, EXHAUSTED.

DENHAM (O.S)
(loud whisper)
I'll see ya, Jack!

DENHAM is on the otherside of the CHASM ... looking VERY JUMPY.

JACK
Tell'em to keep the gate open for another twenty-four hours!

DENHAM nods ... he cradles his TOMMY GUN.

DENHAM
Good luck, buddy!

DENHAM vanishes into the JUNGLE.

JACK takes a deep breath and sets off - UNARMED - along KONG'S TRAIL.

EXT. VOLCANIC PLATEAU - DAY

KONG climbs out of the JUNGLE, SCALING a nearly SHEER CLIFF ... he uses ONE HAND to climb - the OTHER HOLDS ANN to his breast.

KONG climbs onto a vast PLATEAU - a VOLCANIC Mars-like landscape, dotted with deep BLOW-HOLES, bubbling MUD POOLS and fissures leaking STEAM with an ANGRY HISS.

KONG sits down and holds ANN in front of his face. He starts to pick TWIGS and LEAVES out of her hair and off her clothing ... a look of DEVOTION in his eyes.

ANN winces as he ROUGHLY pecks at her.

ANN
(gently)
Ok ... Ok ... That's enough.

KONG blinks at her ... he starts clumsily STROKING HER HAIR.

ANN
Ouch! That hurt!

ANN suddenly WRIGGLES in his hand ... he DROPS her to the ground.

ANN walks a few paces and sits on a rock ... KONG sits down beside her.

ANN scratches her head ... KONG scratches his head!

ANN
(bemused)
Stop copying me!

ANN puts her head in her hands ... KONG puts his head in his hands!

ANN can't help but LAUGH. She jumps to her feet ...

ANN
Ok! Try this!

ANN does a DOUBLE CARTWHEEL!

KONG looks at ANN BLANKLY for a moment ... then suddenly does a clumsy ROLL on HIS SHOULDERS! He sits up looking a little dizzy!

ANN laughs freely ... she CLAPS HER HANDS ... KONG CLAPS HIS HANDS and ROLLS OVER AGAIN!

ANN squeals with delight ... with GREAT DRAMATICS, she does a perfect ballet PIROUETTE.

KONG paces from SIDE TO SIDE like an over-excited kid ... He launches into a series of GROUND TREMBLING ROLLS. He sits up, dizzily looking for ANN ... SHE HAS VANISHED!

His playful excitment suddenly turns to PANIC as he looks around for her. He ROARS with ANGUISH, getting more and more AGITATED.

ANN
(calling)
Hey!

She leaps out from behind a rock. KONG BELLOWS and charges at her, SNATCHING HER UP. He ROARS into her face. ANN is GASPING and CHOKING - KONG is clearly holding her TOO TIGHTLY!

ANN face CLOUDS WITH COLOR and she looks TERRIFIED as KONG ROARS out the last of his fear. He CRUSHES her protectively into his CHEST.

ANN manages to push out a STRANGLED SCREAM ... This ALARMS KONG. He drops her on the ground. ANN slumps to her hands and knees GASPING and SOBBING.

KONG is CONFUSED ... he reaches for her.

ANN
(panicked)
Get away!

ANN shoves his fingers away ... she staggers to her feet, cradling her bruised ribs.

ANN
(scared)
Get away from me!

ANN hobbles away from him. KONG lopes around in front of her ... OFFERS HIS HAND. ANN hits out at it.

ANN
(shouting)
No!!! Leave me alone!

KONG cowers away submissively ... he looks confused and hurt.

ANN
Go away!!

ANN hurries away from KONG. He paces after her like a lost dog. ANN spins around ...

ANN
(savagely)
Go away!!!

KONG looks at her for a LONG MOMENT. HEAD BOWED, he turns and walks away ... leaving ANN completely alone on the VOLCANIC PLATEAU.

ANN walks a few paces, then breaks into a sudden RUN ... she runs across a CRACKED, BUBBLING landscape ...

HANDHELD CAMERA follows ANN as she scrambles down crumbling banks ... nearly falls into BOILING MUD when a CRUST OF ROCK cracks beneath her feet ... a PACK OF RAPTORS hiss at her from the other side of the STEAMING LAKE ... she stumbles into a GROVE OF TREES, disturbing a NESTING ELASTOMOSAUR.

As ANN'S helplessness increases, so does the frantic CAMERA as she staggers, cut, bruised and tear stained, through clouds of SULFUROUS GAS on this Hell-on-Earth.

CUT TO:

EXT. WALL/RUINED CITY - NIGHT

ENGLEHORN puffs on his PIPE ... SAILORS armed with RIFLES and TOMMY GUNS are patrolling the WALL ... the area is effectively PROTECTED. There are NO NATIVES in sight ... Everyone is relaxed.

SENTRY SAILOR
(yelling)
Hey! Somebody's approaching!

SAILORS rush to pull the GREAT GATES open ...

DENHAM staggers in and COLLAPSES. He is even more dishevelled than when we saw him last. His clothing is TORN ... blood seeps from CUTS ... he's lost the GUN.

ENGLEHORN gives him a drink from a CANTEEN. DENHAM is GASPING heavily.

ENGLEHORN
Just take it easy ... Where are the others?

DENHAM
(panting)
They're dead.

ENGLEHORN
(shocked)
Oh my God ... Ann?

DENHAM pauses ...

DENHAM
(quietly)
She's dead ... Driscoll too. We've gotta get back to the ship!

ENGLEHORN nods.

ENGLEHORN
(yelling)
Prepare to break camp, men! We're heading back to the Venture!

There's a SENSE OF RELIEF amongst the CREW. TWO SAILORS lift DENHAM up and support him between them.

AT THAT MOMENT! A ZIPPING SOUND fills the air ... a VOLLEY of ARROWS, DARTS and SPEARS fly towards the SAILORS! Within SECONDS 3 SAILORS fall dead, including the TWO supporting DENHAM. He runs with incredible speed and throws himself behind a wall. ENGLEHORN and the 5 SURVIVING SAILORS take shelter, FIRING WILDLY in all directions.

DENHAM
(panicked)
Jesus Christ! Get me outta here!

ENGLEHORN
(grimly)
That's gonna be more difficult than you think ...

NUMEROUS HEAVILY ARMED NATIVES are fleetingly visible ... darting behind RUINS and TREES - cutting the SAILORS off from the beach.

EXT. VOLCANIC PLATEAU - DUSK

The DULL THUDDING of sporadic GUNFIRE can just be HEARD, high on the central VOLCANIC PLATEAU of SKULL ISLAND. The WALL and NATIVE RUINS are visible - some 3 miles away.

The SKY is a FIERY ORANGE as the SUN goes down ... SILHOUETTING the FIGURE of KONG as he sits impassively on a ROCKY BLUFF high above the JUNGLE.

KONG looks DOWNCAST ... he nonchalantly fingers a particularly NASTY looking WOUND - an Allosaur CLAW SLASH down the side of his ribs.

ANN (O.S)
(quietly)
Kong ...

KONG doesn't respond as ANN slowly steps up behind him. She looks a mud-stained mess, hugging herself against the cold.

ANN
I'm sorry.

KONG continues looking out to sea ... we sense the tremendous PRIDE and NOBILITY of this great beast. Very slowly, he turns his head and regards ANN with SAD EYES.

ANN
I'm sorry.

KONG'S BIG PAW unfurls and ANN gratefully climbs into it. He raises her against his chest ... ANN nestles into KONG'S FUR.

EXT. SKULL MOUNTAIN - DUSK

In VERTIGO INDUCING shots, KONG climbs HIGHER AND HIGHER - up into the HIGHEST PEAK of SKULL ISLAND ... carefully cradling ANN in his hand.

A sudden FLAP OF WINGS and FLICKERING SHADOW causes KONG to pull ANN close to his chest as a sinister BAT-TYPE CREATURE lunges at her ... These SCAVENGERS hover in the SKIES around SKULL MOUNTAIN... they have 8 foot wing spans and TALONED FEET. Their faces are more reptile then bat.

EXT. KONG'S LAIR - DUSK

WIDE: KONG steps out of a LARGE ROUND CAVE onto a LEDGE that juts out high over SKULL ISLAND ...

This is KONG'S LAIR ... in fact his CAVE is one of the "eyes" of the SKULL visible from the coast. Over the ledge is a DIZZYING DROP of at least 1000 feet down to the JUNGLE.

The "VENTURE" can be seen - moored off the TIP OF THE ISLAND, some 3 miles away.

KONG casually snatches a careless BAT-THING out of the sky and rips it's wings off ... He steps right to the edge of the LEDGE and BEATS HIS CHEST, ROARING to the whole island in a mighty show of power.

INT. KONG'S LAIR - DUSK

ANN is sitting against a rock, further into the cave ... she watches KONG walk in from the LEDGE. The CAVE has spectacular rock formations and a small LAKE. ORANGE EVENING LIGHT streams in from the back on the cave, where FISSURES open out to the other side of the mountain.

KONG squats on his haunches and CLAPS HIS HANDS ... ANN smiles at him.

ANN YAWNS ... KONG copies her YAWN.

ANN
I'm tired ... Sleepy ...

ANN lies down ... KONG lies down beside her like a big baby. ANN looks at KONG'S BIG BLINKING EYES.

She closes her eyes for a moment, attempting to sleep. She opens them ... KONG is still STARING LOVINGLY at her.

ANN (CONT'D)
Sleep ... go to sleep.
(singing softly)
"Lullaby and good night,
Go to bed and sleep tight,
Close your eyes, start to yawn,
Pleasant dreams until dawn."

KONG is captivated.

DISSOLVE THRU TO:

EXT. SKULL MOUNTAIN - PRE-DAWN

A layer of early morning FOG blankets the island ... only the highest JAGGED PEAKS are visible, protruding up through the LAYER OF MIST.

INT. KONG'S LAIR - PRE-DAWN

CLOSE ON: ANN. She wakes up to find herself CRADLED in KONG'S HAND. He is lying on his side, ASLEEP ... holding ANN close to his face like a child would sleep with a teddy bear. KONG stirs, suddenly opening his mouth in a HUGE YAWN. He opens his eyes, and for a few quiet moments, he and ANN stare at each other.

EXT. KONG'S LAIR - DAWN

KONG steps onto the LEDGE and bellows a MIGHTY ROAR across the island.

PULL BACK ... to reveal JACK! He is clinging to the steep mountain-side, about 50 feet below KONG'S LAIR. It is clear that JACK has been pursuing KONG and ANN throughout the night.

KONG vanishes back inside his cave ... JACK hurriedly continues climbing. He ducks into a narrow FISSURE as BAT-THINGS flap overhead. JACK carefully crawls below an OVERHANG to stay out of sight of the CIRCLING CREATURES.

AT THAT MOMENT ... KONG ROARS in PAIN and ANGER! The powerful SOUND echoes out of the CAVE, momentarily freezing JACK in his tracks.

JACK
(worried)
Ann!

JACK climbs towards the BACK ENTRANCE of the CAVE as fast as he can.

INT. KONG'S LAIR - DAWN

CLOSE ON: KONG ROARING ... He is sitting down, leaning on his ELBOWS as ANN digs into his NASTY WOUND with her fingers!

ANN
Hold still!

KONG winces as ANN digs deep and pulls out a blood-covered ALLOSAUR TOE CLAW! She holds it up in front of his nose.

ANN
Look! See!

KONG pulls his lips back in a grimace.

JACK'S POV ... KONG and ANN in the distance. JACK is carefully closing in from the BACK OF THE CAVE.

EXT. KONG'S LAIR - DAWN

KONG paces onto the LEDGE ... he is SNIFFING ... He FROWNS ... suddenly gets AGITATED. KONG looks up ...

... over 20 BAT-THINGS are MASSING on the CLIFFS above the LAIR, clearly preparing an ATTACK!

KONG races into the CAVE, just as another 20 BAT-THINGS flutter in through the BACK ENTRANCE!!

INT. KONG'S LAIR - DAWN

KONG scoops ANN to his breast, ROARING DEFIANTLY at the BAT-THINGS.

CLOSE ON: A NARROW FISSURE in the VOLCANIC ROCK towards the back of the cave. JACK is HIDDEN from view as BAT-THINGS flutter above them.

The BAT-THINGS suddenly ATTACK ENMASS!! They swoop on KONG and ANN like a swarm of giant bees. KONG ROARS and THRASHES OUT at them in the FRENZY! With, every sweep of his ARM, several BAT-THINGS are KNOCKED TO THE GROUND. KONG keeps moving, twisting and turning, to make it harder for them to get at ANN ... she presses herself close to KONG'S CHEST. BAT-THING TALONS strike at her, slashing KONG'S FINGERS instead.

JACK takes his chance to get closer to ANN ... He leaves the shelter of the FISSURE and hurries across the CAVE. He quietly lowers himself into the waters of the LAKE.

SEVERAL BAT-THINGS are gripping and CLAWING KONG'S BACK in an effort to weaken the huge ape ... He suddenly POUNDS HIS BACK against the WALL of the CAVE, SQUASHING THEM ALL!

The surviving BAT-THINGS wheel away from KONG, HISSING ANGRILY ... 16 lie on the cave floor STUNNED or DEAD. They FLUTTER towards the BACK OF THE CAVE, preparing their NEXT ATTACK.

KONG SNARLS ... he places ANN on the CAVE FLOOR - under an OVERHANG - and CHARGES at the BAT-THINGS!

As KONG thunders past the ROCK POOL, JACK surfaces ... he scrambles out, racing towards ANN!

ANN
(amazed)
Jack!!!

JACK EMBRACES ANN!

ANN
Oh Jack!

JACK
Are you ok? Are you hurt?

ANN
I never thought I'd see you again.

JACK signals for her to be quiet ... KONG is preoccupied swotting BAT-THINGS at the BACK OF THE CAVE ... JACK desperately looks around for an ESCAPE ROUTE ... NOTHING but a 1000 foot drop off the LEDGE into the JUNGLE below! They are TRAPPED!

AT THAT MOMENT! A STUNNED BAT-THING beats it's wings and lifts off the CAVERN FLOOR ... JACK RUNS, LEAPS and GRABS IT'S FEET!

JACK
(urgent)
Ann! Quick! Grab my shoulders!

ANN hestitates ... The BAT-THING flaps furiously, trying to lift JACK'S weight off the ground ... It DRAGS JACK towards the EDGE OF THE LEDGE!

JACK
(yelling)
Jump on!

KONG SEES JACK ... HE SCREAMS WITH RAGE!

ANN is TORN ... she looks at JACK ... looks at KONG ...

JACK
(yelling)
ANN!!!

KONG CHARGES TOWARDS THE LEDGE!

ANN makes a decision ... she runs towards JACK and throws herself forward - GRABBING HIS WAIST ... just as KONG REACHES OUT FOR HER!

JACK hangs onto the TALONED FEET as he and ANN sail out into space, the BAT-THING FLAPPING MADLY above them ... They descend rapidly ... about twice the speed of a parachute.

ANN buries her face into JACK'S waist - not wanting to look back at KONG ROARING WITH GRIEF FROM THE LEDGE.

EXT. RIVER - DAY

The BAT-THING wobbles crazily in the sky, rapidly LOSING ENERGY ... JACK looks down - a FAST FLOWING RIVER is 50 foot below. He RELEASES HIS GRIP!

ANN SCREAMS as she and JACK fall into the RIVER ... They are immediately picked up by the current and SWEPT AWAY. JACK grabs ANN under the arms and hangs onto her tightly.

JACK and ANN are carried into the RAPIDS.

EXT. SHELTERED POOL - DAY

JACK and ANN are swept down a WATERFALL, surfacing into a FAST-FLOWING, but less violent part of the river.

JACK pulls ANN into a SHELTERED POOL ... she is COUGHING and SPLUTTERING, her arm draped over JACK'S neck.

JACK
Take big breaths - you're ok. You took in some water.

ANN'S breathing becomes easier

JACK
Better?

ANN nods ...

JACK
Look ... I know this is not the time or place ...

ANN
(interrupts)
How far is it to the wall?

JACK
... but I'm gonna say it anyway -

ANN
Can we make it by nightfall?

JACK
I love you, Ann.

ANN
What did you say?

JACK grins.

JACK
I love you! I can't believe I said that. It feels good!

ANN
(skeptical)
Are you serious?

JACK nods ...

CONFUSION ... the ANGER clouds ANN'S face.

ANN
(angry)
Liar!

JACK is SHOCKED.

ANN (CONT'D)
(angry)
You don't love me! This is a game ... some sort of sick game! You don't believe in commitment - remember???

JACK
Yeah ... well, I've changed ...

ANN
Have you?

JACK
(agitated)
Jesus Christ! I went through hell for you! What do I have to do?

ANN
(upset)
I don't know, Jack? What did you think? If you rescued me, I'd be eternally grateful?
(yelling)
Well, it doesn't work like that!

ANN starts HITTING JACK with her FISTS ... she unleashes the TERROR of the last 48 hours in a PUNCHING, SOBBING FRENZY.

ANN
(sobbing)
It doesn't work like that!

JACK slips his arms around her and hugs her tightly ...

JACK
(gently)
Hey, hey ... you're ok ... it's ok ...

After a moment he pulls back and looks at her inquiringly.

ANN looks at him ... her face TEAR STAINED.

ANN
(softly)
I love you, Jack.

ANN gently KISSES HIM.

A DISTANT ROAR!

AN ENRAGED KONG is visible ... quickly descending from his mountain lair!

JACK
Hang onto me.

JACK pushes them back out into the FAST-FLOWING RIVER and they are SWEPT AWAY.

CUT TO:

EXT. WALL/NATIVE RUINS - DAY

A BATTLE raging at the NATIVE CITY ... BODIES are strewn around - dozens of NATIVES, SAILORS empaled with spears and arrows. It's like a scene from the movie "Zulu".

A SMALL GROUP of SURVIVORS from the ship are holed up behind STONE BLOCKS atop the GREAT WALL. DENHAM, ENGLEHORN and THREE SAILORS are looking EXHAUSTED and DEFEATED. DENHAM fires at a group of NATIVES with a TOMMY GUN ... it EMPTIES.

ENGLEHORN
(grimly)
That was the last of our ammo.

DENHAM suddenly points across the TREETOPS.

DENHAM
(excited)
They're coming!!

POV: TWO BOATLOADS OF REINFORCEMENTS from the "VENTURE" are rowing towards the beach!

ENGLEHORN
It's too late ...

A MASSIVE TIDE of 200 NATIVES are advancing towards the WALL! DENHAM, ENGLEHORN and the SAILORS reach for whatever WEAPONS they can find.

AT THAT MOMENT!

The GATES SWING OPEN ... JACK and ANN come racing in! In his panic, JACK doesn't notice the BATTLE DEBRIS ... He pushes the GATES closed, yelling for imagined help ...

JACK
(urgent yelling)
Barricade the gates! Quick!

ANN
Jack! ...
(louder)
Jack!!

JACK turns ... is confronted by the sight of 200 NATIVES, charging across the square! 50 NATIVES are coming straight at JACK and ANN, SPEARS RAISED!

JACK and ANN are backed right against the GATES.

KONG ROARS!!! JACK hears his FOOTSTEPS pounding towards the GATES at HIGH SPEED! JACK grabs ANN and pushes her ALONG THE WALL, just clearing the GATES as ...

KONG CRASHES THROUGH! The GATES are SMASHED OFF THEIR HINGES ... 7 story tall gates - weighing 5 tons - land on the NATIVES with a sound like someone stepping on egg-shells!

KONG strides into the SQUARE, BEATING HIS CHEST and ROARING.

DENHAM
Holy shit!

The SURVIVING NATIVES scatter! KONG ramages after them, STOMPING ON THEM and BITING THEIR HEADS OFF ... in a scene that not only gets a PG 13, but the director is PRAISED by the MPAA for his sensitivity!

DENHAM, ENGLEHORN and the SAILORS take their chance to slip away towards the beach.

JACK pulls ANN away from the GATES, slipping behind cover to avoid being seen by KONG ... They run through the GIANT CARVED HEAD ... into the TUNNEL COMPLEX that leads to the beach. JACK snatches a NATIVE SPEAR off the ground on the way.

A few brave NATIVE WARRIORS hurl SPEARS at KONG ... but they either bounce off, or only just penetrate the skin.

KONG picks up a LARGE BRONZE "KONG" STATUE and hurls it at a GROUP of SPEAR THROWERS perched atop a STONE BUILDING.

INT. MUMMY CHAMBER - DAY

JACK and ANN are racing through the MUMMY CHAMBER when the STATUE smashes through the roof! ANN stumbles and ROLLS. KONG ROARS as he SEES HER through the DEMOLISHED ROOF. He reaches for her, SWEEPING MUMMIES onto the floor with his GROPING HANDS.

JACK pulls ANN further down the TUNNELS ...out of KONG'S REACH.

EXT. RUINED CITY - DAY

KONG heads TOWARDS THE BEACH, his way suddenly BLOCKED by 50 NATIVES throwing SPEARS and SHOOTING ARROWS. They thud into his chest ... he pulls them out, CHARGING THE NATIVES in a FURY!

EXT. BEACH - DAY

The "VENTURE'S" REINFORCEMENTS arrive on the beach just as DENHAM, ENGLEHORN and the 3 SAILORS come running out of the JUNGLE. Behind them KONG can be seen smashing his way towards the beach!

DENHAM THROWS HIMSELF in one of the BOATS.

DENHAM
(screaming)
Get outta here!

JACK and ANN race out of the TUNNELS and onto the BEACH ... just as KONG CHARGES UP BEHIND THEM! They get halfway across the sand before KONG scoops ANN up triumphantly!

KONG'S AGGRESSION dissipates ... he holds ANN cupped in his hand ... he STROKES HER HAIR with his FOREFINGER.

JACK THROWS THE SPEAR into the BACK of KONG'S LEG, just behind the knee!

KONG ROARS in pain as his leg collapses, sending him SPRAWLING on the sand ... releasing ANN.

JACK
(yelling)
Get him!!!

Before anyone can react, JACK snatches a TOMMY GUN from a SAILOR and aims it at KONG'S HEAD.

ANN
(horrified)
No!!!

JACK FIRES! CLICK ... Gun's EMPTY!

JACK
(yelling)
Come on!

JACK CLUBS KONG'S HEAD with the GUN BUTT ... KONG slumps in PAIN. OTHER SAILORS quickly join JACK, BEATING KONG with GUNS, OARS, even ROCKS. KONG attempts to STRIKE OUT, but quickly COWERS, trying to protect his HEAD.

ANN
(screaming)
Stop! No! Leave him! Stop it, Jack ... No!!

ANN grabs JACK, trying to PULL HIM AWAY ... THUMPING HIM.

ANN
(screaming)
Leave him! Jack!

JACK
(yelling)
Somebody hold her!

KONG'S POV ... ANN being restrained by a SAILOR, TEARS streaming down her face. GROTESQUE FLASHES of SAILOR'S FACES filled with hate - clubbing ... Distorted sound of YELLING ... CLUBBING ... SOUNDS FADE - except for ANN'S VOICE ...

ANN
(sobbing)
I'm sorry ... I'm so sorry ...

A FILM OF WATER washes over KONG'S POV ...

SLOW FADE TO BLACK.

SECONDS LATER ...

CLOSE ON: A FRESH MAGAZINE clicks into a TOMMY GUN. The GUN is COCKED ...

ENGLEHORN aims the GUN at the UNCONSCIOUS KONG'S HEAD. ANN is SOBBING.

DENHAM (O.S)
(yelling)
Hold it! Don't kill him!

ENGLEHORN hesitates as DENHAM rushes over ...

DENHAM
I want him alive!
(excited)
We came to shoot a motion picture, but we could take back something far greater than any movie you could imagine! I can see it now ... his name in lights! "King Kong - the Eighth Wonder of the World"!

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. BROADWAY/NEW YORK - NIGHT

"KING KONG - the EIGHTH WONDER OF THE WORLD" in HUGE NEON LIGHTS on the marquee of a large Broadway THEATRE.

The STREET is busy, with a LARGE CROWD flocking outside the THEATRE ... TAXI'S unloading PEOPLE in TUXEDOS and EVENING DRESS. The GLITTERATI of NEW YORK have turned out for this one. SCALPERS are selling tickets outside the door.

INT. THEATRE AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

The AUDIENCE are settling in their seats ... USHERS working the ailses. It is a GRAND OLD THEATRE with spectacular DECOR and a capacity of about 1200. Tonight is a FULL HOUSE.

An USHER shows an ELDERLY LADY to her seat.

ELDERLY LADY
Is this one of Mr Denham's cute little animal pictures?

USHER
This is not a motion picture, Madam. It's more in the nature of a personal appearance.

A COUPLE are sitting together ... The HUSBAND has clearly come under duress ...

HUSBAND
(checks watch)
The Yankees'll be in the second inning. This had better be worth it!

INT. DENHAM'S OFFICE/THEATRE - NIGHT

TWO BURLY SECURITY GUARDS deliver the BOX OFFICE TAKINGS in cash to DENHAM ... He is dressed in a TUX and looks much rested since his Skull Island adventures.

DENHAM
Thanks fellas.

DENHAM loads the cash into HIS SAFE.

JACK (O.S)
Hey, Denham!

JACK is standing in the office doorway, looking very UNCOMFORTABLE in his TUX.

JACK
Payment in advance. That was the deal.

DENHAM stuffs a WAD OF CASH into an ENVELOPE.

DENHAM
Two grand, Jack. And there's plenty more where that came from! I'm taking Kong on the road ... you could become a permanent part of the show.

JACK shakes his head as he slips the ENVELOPE into his TOP POCKET.

JACK
Not me. I always hated circuses Thought I'd head out west ... get into some Redwood country.

DENHAM
How about Ann? Is she going with you?

JACK tenses up ... but tries to hide his discomfort from Denham.

JACK
Haven't seen her - not since we got back.

DENHAM
She's got a bit of an attitude, that girl. She turned down a bunch of money. Too bad ... it would've been a great angle - "Beauty and the Beast".
(shakes head)
Pity ... I thought you two had something going there.

JACK shrugs ...

JACK
I don't need anyone tagging along with me.

INT. BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

DENHAM and JACK are walking through a BUSY BACKSTAGE AREA. A PRESS OFFICER runs up to DENHAM.

PRESS OFFICER
The press are clammering to come backstage, Mr Denham! Take some photos of Kong.

DENHAM
Let'em wait. They'll have their opportunity when the curtain goes up!

DENHAM pats JACK on the back.

DENHAM
Are you nervous Jack?

JACK
Nah. Let's get it over with.

CUT TO:

INT. THEATRE AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

The THEATRE is packed ... The AUDIENCE HUSH as the LIGHTS DIM. A GIANT CURTAIN covers the STAGE, with just a single MICROPHONE to one side.

ANNOUNCER (O.S)
(loudspeaker)
Ladies and gentlemen ... Mr Carl Denham!

MUSIC strikes up and the CROWD APPLAUD as DENHAM strides onto the stage in the GLARE of the SINGLE SPOTLIGHT. He steps up to a MIRCOPHONE.

DENHAM
(amplified)
Ladies and gentleman ... If anybody here is of faint disposition, or weak heart I suggest you take this opportunity to leave the auditorium.

The CROWD MURMUR NERVOUSLY ... but of course, NOBODY leaves!

DENHAM (CONT'D)
(amplified)
We all hear tales of adventure we scarcely believe ... but seeing is believing, and tonight you will see Kong - the living proof of our adventure! An adventure in which twenty-two of our party met terrible deaths! Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to introduce you to you the man who felled the mighty beast armed only with a native spear! Mr Jack Driscoll!

BIG APPLAUSE as another SPOTLIGHT finds JACK stepping onto the stage ... His earlier bravado has vanished - he looks VERY NERVOUS! He joins DENHAM at the MIRCOPHONE.

DENHAM
(amplified)
Well, Jack ... what is it like to risk your life to save a beautiful woman?

JACK looks out over a sea of 1200 faces ... he hesitates. DENHAM'S smile wavers as he realises JACK has dried up with stage fright!

DENHAM
(amplified)
Did you fear for your life?

JACK
(long pause)
Yeah.

The AUDIENCE CHUCKLE.

DENHAM
(amplified)
It must have been terrifying?

JACK
(long pause)
Yeah.

The AUDIENCE LAUGH. DENHAM puts his hand over the MIC and whispers angrily at JACK.

DENHAM
(whispers)
A grand a word! Thanks for nothing, pal!

DENHAM turns back to the AUDIENCE ...

DENHAM
(amplified)
Ladies and gentleman! It is now time to see for yourselves ... One who was a King and a God of the world he knew, but who now comes to civilisation as a captive - as an exhibit to gratify mankind's insatiable curiosity. Ladies and gentlemen ... Look upon Kong - the Eighth Wonder of the World!!!

With a dramatic flourish, DENHAM waves his arm at the CURTAIN ... It slowly rises, as MUSIC strikes up.

KONG is REVEALED ... His SITS SLUMPED, HEAD turned away from the AUDIENCE. This is a BOWED, BROKEN SPIRIT ... not the mighty ape we were expecting to see.

JACK looks at KONG with PITY.

His WRISTS are MANACLED, attached by long lengths of THICK CHAIN that lead to the BEAM of the BIG STEEL SCAFFOLD he sits on. Other MANACLES and CHAINS secure his ANKLES and WAIST.

There is BIG GASP from the AUDIENCE ... KONG'S sheer size is SPECTACULAR.

DENHAM looks a little ANXIOUS at KONG'S LETHARGY.

DENHAM
Don't be alarmed, Ladies and Gentleman! Those chains are made of chrome steel!

KONG continues to SIT ... he picks at his TOES. DENHAM steps past JACK, towards the WINGS, WHISPERING to STAGEHANDS ...

DENHAM
(whispering)
Get him on his feet!

INSERT: HUGE ELECTRICAL WINCHES start GRINDING BACKSTAGE ... winding in KONG'S WRIST CHAINS onto big drums.

KONG'S ARMS are pulled up towards the STEEL BEAM ... He is hauled to his feet, arms out-stretched - to APPRECIATIVE MURMURS from the CROWD. His HEAD is slumped.

DENHAM
(amplified)
And now, Mr Driscoll will once again approach the mighty beast armed only with a spear!

A STAGEHAND thrusts a SPEAR into JACK'S HAND. DENHAM walks over to JACK.

JACK
(quietly)
Forget it, Denham. I'm not gonna be part of it.

DENHAM
(angry whisper)
I paid you good money. Damn it - get out there!

JACK
(fierce whisper)
Screw you!

DENHAM snatches the SPEAR out of JACK'S GRASP ... He addresses the AUDIENCE.

DENHAM (CONT'D)
(yelling)
It appears Mr Driscoll has lost his nerve!

The AUDIENCE LAUGH.

DENHAM strides towards KONG ... He prods KONG in the stomach with the SPEAR.

KONG ROARS ... The AUDIENCE LAUGH and APPLAUD ... DISTORTED JEERING FACES.

JACK quietly LEAVES THE STAGE.

DENHAM jabs him in the SIDE ... KONG ROARS and rattles the CHAINS. The AUDIENCE CHEER.

DENHAM edges towards closer, TOUCHING KONG'S LEG.

DENHAM
(yelling)
I am actually laying my hand on the twenty-five foot gorilla. Ladies and gentlemen!
(dramatic)
I am touching the beast!

ANN
(angry yell)
Take your filthy paws off him - you ignorant pig!

DENHAM looks ALARMED as ANN strides down the AISLE from the BACK of the THEATRE.

KONG RECOGNISES ANN! He ROARS and pulls on his CHAINS.

DENHAM races over to the MIC in an attempt to pass this off as part of the show.

DENHAM
(amplified)
Ladies and gentlemen! Miss Ann Darrow ... the bravest girl I have ever known!

The CONFUSED AUDIENCE starts to APPLAUD ...

ANN
(angry yell)
Show's over everybody! Go home!

The APPLAUSE dies away.

ANN (CONT'D)
(angry yell)
What are you waiting for? You've seen the big monkey humiliated. Go on ... go home!

Nobody moves.

ANN
(screaming)
Get the hell out of here!!!

DENHAM
(amplified nervous chuckle)
Now Ann ...

SOME PEOPLE STAND and STEP into the AISLES, but nobody actually leaves ... all eyes are on ANN as she bounds up ONSTAGE ...

ANN
You're hurting him - let him down!
(louder)
Let him down!

ANN hurries over to KONG ... he is VERY AGITATED. She gently STROKES HIS LEG.

ANN
(gentle)
It's ok. You're going to be ok. I'm not going to let them hurt you.

DENHAM whispers BACKSTAGE.

DENHAM
(excited whisper)
Get the press in ... This is great!

ANN has EYE CONTACT WITH KONG ... he is CALMING DOWN.

A NOISY MOB of 50 JOURNALISTS and PHOTOGRAPHERS suddenly stream onto the STAGE.

DENHAM
Here's your angle, boys: "Beauty tames the Beast"!

FLASHBULBS POP ... A BABBLE OF QUESTIONS are thrown at ANN:

JOURNALIST'S BABBLE
Smile Ann! Have you got a pet name for the monkey? What does he eat? Come a little closer, Miss Darrow!

ANN
(yelling)
Bugger off!

DENHAM grabs her arm ... Without breaking his GRIN, he hisses in her ear ...

DENHAM
(angry whisper)
Just a couple of photos, you ungrateful little bitch!

DENHAM drags ANN away from KONG! He ROARS! FLASHBULBS POP! ANN starts PROTESTING ... KONG is getting ANXIOUS .. flinching against the CONSTANT FLASHES. DISTORTED JOURNALIST'S FACES ...

JOURNALISTIC BABBLE
Smile Ann! ... Smile!

DENHAM
Come on Ann - Snap out of it!

DENHAM SLAPS HER ON THE CHEEK ... ANN FLINCHES

A DEAFENING ROAR!!! DENHAM looks up AWESTRUCK as KONG STARTS TEARING FREE of his CHAINS in SLOW MOTION!!!

The AUDIENCE SCREAM and PANIC ... The JOURNALISTS SCATTER, sweeping ANN off the STAGE, into the STALLS.

With a MIGHTY FLOURISH, KONG rips off the WAIST RESTRAINTS and IS FREE! The AUDIENCE are BLOCKING the EXITS in their PANIC ... The THEATRE is PACKED!

The STAGE has cleared apart from DENHAM who stands mesmerised by KONG ... he steps back fearfully, falling on his bottom. KONG BEATS HIS CHEST, ROARS ... and STEPS ONTO DENHAM!! DENHAM'S ARMS and LEGS SPASM beneath KONG'S FOOT as he is GROUND INTO OBLIVION!

KONG LEAPS from the stage into the FRONT ROWS ... He STOMPS and RIPS UP SEATS - with people still in them!

ANN is in danger of being CRUSHED BY THE CROWD who are FLOODING TOWARDS a SIDE EXIT DOOR ... She falls under feet ... JACK suddenly pulls her up and hugs her as the TIDE pushes them towards the door.

ANN
Let me go!

KONG is below the BALCONY LEVEL ... He uses AMAZING STRENGTH to PUSH THE BALCONY UP, sending DOZENS OF PEOPLE plummeting into the STALLS. He THROWS a HUGE PIECE of BALCONY at a CROWD OF PANICKING PEOPLE.

KONG sees ANN and JACK stream out of the EXIT DOOR to the street beyond ...

EXT. BROADWAY - NIGHT

JACK pulls ANN - CRYING and PROTESTING - down the SIDEWALK.

Behind them, the VAST THEATRE WALL explodes onto the street, showering PEOPLE and CARS with BRICKS and STEEL ... KONG strides into the MIDDLE OF THE ROAD!!!

CARS drive into KONG'S LEGS ... he smashes his fists onto their ROOFS. OTHER CARS pile into each other ... into SHOP FRONTAGES - it's MAJOR PANIC TIME.

CAR WINDSCREEN POV ... KONG STOMPS on the CAR in FRONT, LIFTS FOOT and STOMPS over CAMERA.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

JACK hurries down an ALLEY, still towing ANN. She is ANGRY ... TEARFUL.

JACK
Come on ... come on! We gotta keep moving!

ANN
(sobbing)
He's gonna die! They'll kill him!

JACK
You bet they're gonna kill him. Your Goddamn gorilla is destroying the city!

JACK grabs ANN'S HAND.

JACK (CONT'D)
He's a monster ... can't you see that!

She pulls away from JACK.

ANN
(quietly)
I'm going to him!

JACK blocks her path.

ANN (CONT'D)
(angry)
Get out of my way!

ANN KICKS and PUNCHES HIM!

JACK
No, Ann ...

JACK suddenly socks ANN on the JAW ... she collapses into his arms!

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

JACK runs - with ANN SLUNG OVER HIS SHOULDER - towards a CAB in the middle of A BUSY STREET - TRAFFIC is snarled up due to KONG'S rampage a couple of blocks away - although there is no sign of KONG on this street.

INT. CAB - NIGHT

JACK slides ANN into the CAB.

JACK
(urgent)
Get the hell outta here!

CAB DRIVER
Listen buddy ... I can only go as fast as the guy in front!
(honks horn)
What is this ... Is the president in town?

JACK
There's a twenty-five foot gorilla on the loose.

Looking from the BACKSEAT as the CAB DRIVER turns to JACK.

CAB DRIVER
And I'm Rudolph Valentino!

KONG STRIDES INTO THE STREET AHEAD!

CLOSE ON: CAB DRIVER'S face as he sees KONG! Without hesitation, he leaps out of the CAB and flees into the night!

POV from BACKSEAT OF CAB ... As KONG comes closer - OVERTURNING CARS and SMASHING HIS FISTS on them. PANICKED DRIVERS PILE into each other. JACK desperately tries his door, but they are WEDGED IN by CARS either side.

KONG LIFTS THE CAR directly in front - HIGH ABOVE HIS HEAD, throwing it into a BUILDING.

JACK clambers over the FRONT SEAT ... as KONG leans over his CAB - LIFTING IT UP!

KONG'S HUGE EYES glance in the WINDOW as he prepares to THROW THE CAB ... He sees ANN!

EXT/INT. STREETS/CAB - NIGHT

ROARING with TRIUMPH, KONG gently lowers the CAB down.

CLOSE ON: JACK'S FOOT depresses ACCELERATOR.

The WHEELS are SPINNING WILDLY at the moment the CAB touches down on the STREET ... In a CLOUD OF BURNING RUBBER, the CAB rips free of KONG'S GRIP, speeding down the ROAD, weaving in and out of the path cut by KONG'S DESTRUCTION.

KONG BOUNDS AFTER THE CAB, running on FOURS with incredible speed.

JACK crosses an INTERSECTION, driving up on the SIDEWALK to get a CLEARER DRIVING LANE ... PEDESTRIANS scatter - not only from the CAB, but from KONG who is in HOT PURSUIT.

The CAB SLEWS across the STREET, disappearing up a TINY ALLEY, only just wide enough for the CAB, but TOO NARROW for KONG.

JACK glances back at KONG ROARING with frustration at the ALLEY ENTRANCE.

EXT/INT. HERALD SQ/CAB - NIGHT

JACK speeds out of the ALLEY and CROSSES the TRAFFIC FLOW, causing much BRAKING and HORN action. He gets SLOWED in THICK TRAFFIC ...

KONG LEAPS from a 7 STORY BUILDING onto the street ... RIGHT IN FRONT OF JACK'S CAB!!!

JACK SWERVES onto the SIDEWALK, accelerating straight through a PLATEGLASS DISPLAY WINDOW into ...

INT. MACYS - NIGHT

MACYS DEPARTMENT STORE!!!

ANN groggily WAKES ... as JACK steers the CAB wildly through AISLES of CLOTHING, scattering SHOPPERS in all directions!

KONG CRASHES INTO the SHOP in PURSUIT! The 15 foot height is too low for him to stand, but he BOUNDS ALONG on his KNUCKLES.

JACK sends the CAB into a couple of TIGHT TURNS ... at the speed KONG is travelling, he SLIDES on the POLISHED FLOORS at each turn, wiping out an area the size of a tennis court before regaining his grip.

JACK rounds a bend and DRIVES straight into a CAMPING EQUIPMENT DISPLAY! TENTS collapse - covering the CAB, before it SLAMS into a WALL. JACK and ANN are thrown forward on IMPACT.

KONG slides around the corner and BOUNDS PAST THE COVERED CAB ... He desperately looks around for JACK and ANN ... getting ANXIOUS and ENRAGED! KONG smashes his way out of MACYS, into 35th STREET.

ANN rises in the back seat.

JACK
Are you ok? Ann?

ANN climbs out of the car and HEADS TOWARDS THE STREET!

ANN
Goodbye Jack ...

JACK runs after her.

JACK
Ann!

EXT. 35th STREET - NIGHT

ANN walks into the middle of the road ...

ANN
He won't harm me ...
(yelling)
Kong!

KONG is 50 yards away ... he sees ANN, ROARS and WALKS TOWARDS her on his KNUCKLES.

JACK runs up to ANN.

JACK
(highly emotional)
Ann! I need you ... I wanna be with you ... I love you, Ann.

ANN stares at him for a long moment ... KONG is looming up behind her.

ANN
(gently)
No Jack ... you don't know what love is.

KONG'S HAND gently lifts her up ... he very GENTLY STROKES HER HAIR ... a TENDER LOOK on his face.

JACK looks up at the HUGE GORILLA holding ANN, a mixture of AWE and SHOCK on his face.

ANN
It's alright Jack ... it's alright.

JACK watches ANN disappear into the night ...

... he slides down the wall of the EMPTY STREET, head in hands, SOBBING LOUDLY.

EXT. MID-TOWN/STREETS & ROOFTOPS - NIGHT

KONG is moving along a ROOFTOP - about 10 STORIES HIGH. He is holding ANN close to his breast. He looks down at the STREETS - now largely DESERTED. All around him the MANHATTAN SKYLINE resembles some GAUDY PRIMEVAL LANDSCAPE.

KONG gently puts ANN down, looking LOVINGLY at her ... He suddenly ROLLS OVER PLAYFULLY!

ANN
No, Kong!

KONG CLAPS HIS HANDS.

ANN
(upset)
No time for play ...

KONG looks at ANN, not understanding ... A SEARCHLIGHT BEAM swings onto him. KONG goes to the EDGE of the BUILDING and ROARS ANGRILY at the MOBILE SEARCHLIGHT 100 feet below.

ANN
(alarmed)
No!

AT THAT MOMENT!

BAM! BAM! BAM! ... HEAVY MACHINE GUN FIRE RICHOCHETS all around. KONG ROARS as BULLETS GRAZE HIS SHOULDER! ...

KONG SCOOP ANN UP and runs!

ANN clutches his FINGERS as he BOUNDS along the ROOFS at HIGHSPEED! A SEARCHLIGHT suddenly swings onto KONG from BELOW ...

ARMY VEHICLES are RACING along the QUIET STREETS ... An ARMOURED CAR is firing at KONG ... followed by a TRUCK carrying a MOBILE SEARCHLIGHT.

The STREETS are TEEMING with these VEHICLES as the ARMY spreads out across town in the hunt for KONG.

As BULLETS WHIZZ around him, KONG LEAPS ACROSS THE STREET - 10 stories high! He LANDS on the opposite ROOFTOP and BOUNDS AWAY ...

ANOTHER SEARCHLIGHT FINDS HIM! ... And ANOTHER! The ARMY are closing in. MACHINE GUN FIRE rips past him as he LEAPS another GREAT DISTANCE across the STREET. ANN clings on, her EYES TIGHTLY SHUT.

ARMORED CARS and MOBILE SEARCHLIGHTS converge on KONG ... He has RUN OUT OF ROOFTOP ... ahead of him, across the CAVERN of 34th STREET, rises the SHEER WALL of the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING!!!

KONG leaps across the CHASM, crashing into the SIDE of the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING! GLASS RAINS DOWN 12 STORIES TO THE STREET as KONG uses WINDOWS for HAND AND FOOT HOLDS. He is ONE-HANDED - his other hand still holding ANN protectively to his CHEST.

FOUR SEARCHLIGHTS swing onto KONG ... A MOBILE ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUN screeches to a HALT on 34th STREET - this is obviously the army's KILLING WEAPON OF CHOICE.

Within seconds the LARGE GUN TARGETS KONG ...

POV: Looking up CROSSHAIRS at KONG, high on the side of the building - a total SITTING DUCK.

GUNNER
Ready to fire, sir!

COMMANDER
How many points do we get for a big monkey?

The GUNNERS LAUGH ... the COMMANDER raises his BINOCULARS to watch the spectacle.

COMMANDER
Stand by ...

AT THAT MOMENT ... KONG ROARS DEFIANTLY at the SOLDIERS, swinging ANN out over the street.

COMMANDER
(shocked)
Hold your fire! He's carrying a woman!!

The ORDER is shouted down the STREET to the ASSEMBLING SOLDIERS.

SERGEANTS
(yelling)
Hold your fire!!!

KONG carefully places ANN on his BROAD SHOULDER ... she GRABS HOLD OF HIS FUR.

The MILITARY watch helplessly as KONG starts climbing the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING.

CUT TO:

EXT. 39th STREET - NIGHT

JACK is several blocks away, unaware of the situation at the Empire State Building.

He wanders down an EMPTY STREET ... a few ABANDONED CARS are dotted around, but all is QUIET. His shoulders are slumped, his stride falters ... he looks like a BROKEN MAN.

A VEHICLE APPROACHES ...

JACK turns as a MILITARY POLICE CAR pulls up along side him.

MP
For Chrissake buddy! Get your ass inside - there's a goddamn gorilla on the loose!

JACK doesn't react ... he keeps on walking.

MP
(angry)
Hey! Did you hear me, mister?

A 2nd MILITARY POLICE VEHICLE pulls up ...

CLOSE ON: A STREET URCHIN watches from the shadows.

2nd MP
Hey Bill ... you gotta hear this! The stupid ape's climbing up the Empire State carrying a goddamn woman on his shoulder! They're dispatching Naval planes from Wrights Field at dawn. Guess the boys want a little target practice! Orders are to blow the son of a bitch away as soon as he puts the girl down!

The 2nd VEHICLE ROARS AWAY ...

CLOSE ON: JACK, still walking as the 1st MILITARY POLICE VEHICLE cruises up along side ...

MP
Do ya want a tip, buddy? Get yourself down to Fifth Avenue ... When they blow that stinkin' piece of shit off the building there'll be bits of gorilla all over the street! It'll take the sanitation department a week to clean it up!

The MP LAUGHS LOUDLY as the VEHICLE ROARS AWAY, leaving JACK alone in the street. He is outside a CINEMA - showcasing some new epic movie about World War One Flying Aces. An overly romanticized POSTER features a Jean Harlow type in an embrace with a pilot.

The STREETS are wet ... LIGHTS glisten off the surface. JACK pauses - glancing at the reflection ...

POV: WET STREET ... the UNDERSIDE OF AN AIRPLANE is reflected in the water!

JACK slowly looks up ...

TWO OLD AIRPLANES have been strung high across the street to promote the movie ... a FOKKER TRIPLANE ... and a SOPWITH CAMEL!

CLOSE ON: JACK'S REACTION ...

CUT TO:

The SOPWITH CAMEL lands with a bounce on the street! JACK has released the support ropes ... he hurries over to the PLANE, quickly assessing it's condition.

KID (O.S)
That thing can't fly, mister!

JACK is surprised to see the little AFRICAN-AMERICAN URCHIN - about 8 years - emerge from the shadows. He is clearly HOMELESS.

KID (CONT'D)
They wouldn't hang it on wires if it was still working.

JACK is peering into the cockpit.

JACK
I'm not so sure, kid.

CUT TO:

EXT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING/MANHATTAN - PRE DAWN

WIDE SHOT ... KONG climbing the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING, silhouetted against the LIGHTENING SKY. He is nearing the top.

LOOKING DOWN ... ANN clings to KONG'S SHOULDER, a DIZZYING 1000 foot drop to the street below.

KONG scales the final 130 feet of the Empire State Building - the airship mooring mast - and CLIMBS ONTO the STEEL DOME AT the TOP. He gently places ANN down on the LIP and STANDS on TWO LEGS ...

WIDER ... KONG BEATS HIS CHEST, ROARING DEFIANTLY!

WIDER ... KONG is a SPECK on the summit of the HUGE building.

A LAYER of EARLY MORNING FOG blankets Manhattan ... only the TALLEST BUILDINGS are visible, protruding up through the LAYER OF MIST.

His ROAR ECHOES over the city.

EXT. 39th STREET - DAWN

KONG'S ROAR reaches JACK ... he pauses for a moment, then hurries to the PLANE, carrying a CONTAINER OF PETROL he has just SIPHONED from a CAR.

KID
They used to fly these in the war, mister.

JACK
Is that right?

JACK pours PETROL into the plane's GAS TANK.

KID
Are you gonna start it up?

JACK
Yeah.

KID
Are you gonna kill the gorilla? I wanna see him fall off the building!

JACK
You don't wanna be talking like that.

KID
But he's bad!

JACK pauses ... he kneels down in front of the kid.

JACK
(sadly)
He ain't bad, kid ... He doesn't know how to be bad.

The KID looks at JACK QUIZZICALLY.

Jack reacts to the SOUND of DISTANT PLANE ENGINES.

JACK
Go give the propeller a couple of turns - nice and slowly ... Quick now!

EXT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING/MANHATTAN - DAWN

Looking at MANHATTAN from the HARBOR ... The Empire State Building rises from the MIDTOWN area like a giant solitary finger, reaching for the heavens.

4 NAVAL BIPLANES suddenly ROAR INTO SHOT, sweeping low over the DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT ... and closing in on KONG. These are TWO-SEATERS, armed with TWIN MACHINE-GUNS for the PILOT, and a flexible MACHINE GUN for the OBSERVER.

A COLD WIND blows ANN'S hair as she stands on the lip of the dome, watching the PLANES approach. KONG is UNEASY about these BUZZING PREDATORS as they CIRCLE above him.

CLOSE ON: NAVAL PLANE COCKPIT ... the LEAD PILOT talks to the others via an RT.

LEAD PILOT
(over RT)
Here we go, boys!

The NAVAL PLANES peel off into an ATTACKING DIVE at KONG.

DOWN GUNSIGHTS ... drifting left and right as KONG grows in size ... LOCKED ON!

CLOSE ON: PILOT'S FINGER on trigger.

KONG is suddenly FEARFUL ... he INSTINCTIVELY REACHES FOR ANN, holding her protectively!

LEAD PILOT
(over RT)
Pull out! Pull out! He has the girl!

The PLANES split to either side of KONG, ZOOMING close by with a deafening roar.

EXT. 39th STREET - DAWN

CLOSE ON ... The SOPWITH CAMEL'S Gnome rotary engine SPINS, COUGHS and DIES.

JACK is at the FRONT of the PLANE, desperately SPINNING the PROPELLOR with both hands, trying to kick the plane into life. The KID is sitting in the cockpit.

JACK
(urgent)
Flick the switch again!

JACK SPINS THE PROP ... the engine COUGHS, blows out a CLOUD OF BLACK SMOKE ... and ROARS INTO LIFE!!

JACK lifts the KID out and clambers into the cockpit! The engine NOISE is LOUD ... propeller wash blasts his hair and clothes.

KID
(yelling)
Hey mister! You dropped this!

The KID picks up JACK'S ENVELOPE - containing the 2 grand - off the road. He offers it to JACK.

KID (CONT'D)
(yelling)
You wanna be more careful.

JACK hesitates ... he SMILES at the KID.

JACK
(yelling)
It's your lucky day, kid! Stand back!

The KID steps back, clutching the ENVELOPE as JACK OPENS THE THROTTLE. The ENGINE WINDS UP and the SOPWITH CAMEL starts moving down 39th street!

It BUILDS UP SPEED VERY QUICKLY, racing past ABANDONED CARS and BUILDINGS ... The TAIL LIFTS OFF THE GROUND ...

SUDDENLY!

A MILITARY VEHICLE DRIVES across an INTERSECTION directly in front of the PLANE! JACK pulls back on the stick and the SOPWITH CAMEL LURCHES INTO THE AIR! It SKIMS over the VEHICLE, CLIMBING into the air rapidily!

EXT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING/MANHATTAN - DAWN

KONG is getting ANGRY at the BUZZING PLANES circling around him ... He puts ANN DOWN on the DOME!

ANN
(yelling)
No! Pick me up! Kong!

KONG ROARS at the PLANES, as if issuing a CHALLENGE.

The LEAD PILOT waves to the OTHER PLANES.

LEAD PILOT
(over RT)
Ok ... this time! Here we go ...

The NAVAL PLANES PEEL AWAY for the ATTACK ... They dive towards KONG ... lining him up in their sights ...

KONG ROARS at them ... ANN is screaming ...

ANN
NO!!!

AT THAT MOMENT ... JACK'S SOPWITH CAMEL zooms right past KONG and ANN, flying STRAIGHT AT THE NAVAL PLANES!!! JACK is VISIBLE in the cockpit, HAIR BLOWING in the wind.

ANN
(yelling)
Jack??

The NAVAL PLANES are forced to SCATTER in ALL DIRECTIONS as the tiny SOPWITH CAMEL meets them HEAD-ON!!

JACK TURNS TIGHTLY and flies at the REGROUPING NAVAL PLANES, sending them into disarray!

LEAD PILOT
(over RT)
Go for the ape! Go for the ape!

The 4 NAVAL PLANES fly at KONG from different directions! MACHINE GUNS START FIRING! JACK throws his plane around like a MADMAN, trying to deflect their AIM.

KONG ROARS, and SNATCHES at the NAVAL PLANES as they ZOOM by ... he FLINCHES as he is HIT BY BULLETS! ANN SCREAMS!

JACK DIVES at a NAVAL PLANE, causing it to TURN SHARPLY - straight into KONG'S GRIP! KONG grabs the NAVAL PLANE, RIPPING IT'S WINGS OFF! He hurls it down towards the street!

JACK nearly collides with the LEAD PILOT, who desperately veers away!

LEAD PILOT
(over RT)
Let's take this guy out!

The 3 REMAINING NAVAL PLANES OPEN FIRE on JACK ... he DODGES around the SKY, avoiding STREAMS OF TRACER FIRE.

JACK steers his CAMEL towards KONG with the 3 NAVAL PLANES hot on his tail ... the NAVAL PILOTS focus on lining JACK up in their sights - just as he BARREL ROLLS past KONG.

The NAVAL PILOTS suddenly realise JACK has led them DANGEROUSLY CLOSE to KONG ... they VEER AWAY, but it's TOO LATE for one NAVAL PLANE! KONG swipes at it, CONNECTING with enough force to SHATTER IT'S TAIL SECTION!

The CRIPPLED PLANE COLLIDES INTO IT'S COMPANION, sending BOTH PLANES tumbling towards the street! PARACHUTES balloon out.

The LAST NAVAL PLANE - flown by the LEAD PILOT - zooms after JACK!

JACK rolls his SOPWITH CAMEL into a terrifyingly STEEP DIVE down the side of the CHRYSLER BUILDING!

The NAVAL PLANE follows JACK as he pulls out of the dive and weaves amongst the MEDIUM-RISE BUILDINGS of 5th & 6th AVENUE. JACK flies straight at AN ADVERTISING BANNER strung across the street ... he carefully COLLECTS IT with his WHEELS, ripping it away from the buildings!

JACK rolls his CAMEL upside down, releasing the BANNER ... The NAVAL PLANE flies into it, BLOCKING THE LEAD PILOT'S VIEW!

The NAVAL PLANE smashes into the side of a BUILDING!

JACK zooms VICTORIOUSLY past the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING.

ANN
(yelling)
Jack!!!

TEARS of JOY stream down her face as JACK "BUZZES" her and KONG. He waves at ANN.

AT THAT MOMENT ...

BULLETS RIDDLE JACK'S PLANE! As the Sopwith Camel disintegrates, 12 BOEING P26 FIGHTER PLANES ROAR PAST!

These are heavily armed aluminium monoplane fighters - state-of-the-art killing machines.

ANN SCREAMS!

JACK has no control of the CAMEL ... it CARTWHEELS out of the sky ... JACK knows it's all over.

CRUUMMP!!! KONG GRABS JACK'S PLANE!! He holds the WINGS, stopping the PLANE in MID-FALL! The shattered FUSELAGE suddenly splinters away from the wings, slipping from KONG'S GRASP ... For a MOMENT the FUSELAGE - with JACK - tumbles away from KONG, towards the street!

WRECKAGE hits the top of the BUILDING, causing the FUSELAGE to jerk to a SUDDEN HALT ... JACK FALLS OUT OF THE COCKPIT ... slides down the length of the FUSELAGE, and just manages to GRAB THE RUDDER!

JACK dangles a 1000 feet above 5th AVENUE ... The FUSELAGE swinging from 2 lengths of RIGGING WIRE snagged on the DOME!

ANN
(shocked)
JACK!!!

ANN rushes to the EDGE of the DOME, but JACK is way out of reach ... The RUDDER starts to BREAK AWAY!

KONG'S HAND suddenly GRABS JACK, lifting him to SAFETY!

He places JACK gently next to ANN ... KONG watches as they EMBRACE.

The P26'S are CIRCLING in the DISTANCE, preparing for an ATTACK RUN. KONG looks FEARFUL ... he is WEAKENING from his BULLET WOUNDS.

ANN gently breaks away from JACK and KONG PICKS ANN UP. JACK can only watch as KONG TENDERLY HOLDS HER ... the great ape is clearly in PAIN ... yet he looks mesmerised at ANN as her long blonde hair blows in the wind.

The P26'S turn towards KONG and form a straight line.

LEAD PILOT
(over RT)
We are ignoring the girl! Repeat: The girl is expendable. She's going down with the ape! Here we go!

The NAVAL PLANES start their ATTACK RUN!

JACK can see what's coming ...

JACK
(desperate yell)
Ann! They are going to shoot! Ann!

KONG looks down at JACK ...

He very gently lowers ANN and returns her to JACK. JACK HOLDS ANN tenderly as she starts SOBBING.

KONG looks FEARFULLY AT THE APPROACHING PLANES ... He is BREATHING in GASPS ... very DISTRESSED.

ANN
Kong! Look at me! ... please!

KONG turns to ANN ... He gently touches her hair. She clutches his FINGERS, hugging them, trying to COMFORT HIM. TEARS STREAM DOWN HER FACE ...

ALL SOUND FADES AWAY ... except for a gentle breeze ...

ANN
(singing softly)
Lullaby ... and goodnight,
Go to bed and sleep tight ...

The FEAR leaves KONG ... he looks at ANN with TENDERNESS and LOVE. She fights back the urge to burst into tears.

ANN (CONT'D)
(singing softly)
Close your eyes, start to yawn,
Pleasant dreams until ...

CLOSE ON: KONG ... he SUDDENLY WINCES.

SOUND CRASHES BACK IN ... with the DEAFENING ROAR of the PLANES flying past.

For one last precious second ANN HUGS KONG'S HAND ... he slowly topples back ... disappearing off the side of the building.

ANN SOBS with GRIEF ... JACK gently takes her in his arms ... she buries her face in his chest.

INT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING LOBBY - MORNING

OFFICE WORKERS and PEDESTRIANS are streaming through the LOBBY, heading towards 5th AVENUE.

The ELEVATOR doors open ... JACK and ANN step into the LOBBY, walking AGAINST THE FLOW.

JACK
(gently)
Don't look, Ann ... Take my hand and don't look back.

He wraps his ARM around her ... she buries her face against his shoulder, TEARS OF GRIEF silently running down her face.

As JACK and ANN disappear into the crowd, they pass an OLD LADY.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - MORNING

CROWDS are gathering to STARE at KONG'S BODY.

A POLICEMAN ushers people away ...

POLICEMAN
Come on folks ... it's all over. The airplane's got him.

PUSH IN ... to the OLD LADY standing in the crowd. She shakes her head sadly ...

OLD LADY
It wasn't the airplanes ... it was beauty killed the beast.

The OLD LADY turns and slowly walks away from CAMERA.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END

KING KONG

Screenplay by

Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens
& Peter Jackson

Based on a Story by

MERIAN C. COOPER and EDGAR WALLACE

© Universal Pictures 2005

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

CLOSE ON: A scrawny MONKEY scratches.

ANGLES ON: Defeated, listless ANIMALS, in the bleak environs of a dilapidated ZOO.

WIDER: It is CENTRAL PARK ZOO in depression era NEW YORK. The PARK itself is like a GARBAGE DUMP, dotted with squalid SHANTY TOWNS.

Against these BLEAK IMAGES, the SOUND of a BRIGHT, BRASSY SONG fades up: Al Jolson, singing “I’m Sitting on Top of the World”.

The sky line of MANHATTAN rises in the background, a grim steaming jungle on this cold FALL day.

EXT. NY STREETS - DAY

SONG continues over:

IMAGES: The CROWDED STREETS of NEW YORK ... beneath the bustle is a sense of despair.

LONG SOUP LINES snake along the STREETS.

The HUNGRY search through RUBBISH BINS for FOOD. SKYSCRAPERS rise steadily upwards as more people are evicted from their homes.

HOMELESS sleep amid steaming VENTS and GARBAGE STREWN GUTTERS.

Intercut:

INT. VAUDEVILLE THEATRE - NIGHT

SONG continues over:

MANNY, an old-time VAUDEVILLIAN, hurriedly fixes a large DROOPY MOUSTACHE on to a YOUNG WOMAN’S TOP LIP ... this is ANN DARROW.

IMAGES: Weird and wonderful snatches of VAUDEVILLE ACTS follow ... singers, jugglers, boxing ladies.

Intercut with:

EXT. NY STREETS - DAY

The COLOR and MUSIC contrast with the SOUP LINES and SLUMPED SHOULDERS of the REAL WORLD.

INT. VAUDEVILLE THEATRE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ANN on STAGE ... dressed as an ELEGANT GENT, she launches into ‘I’m Just Wild About Harry’ with HARRY, a larger-than-life PERFORMER dressed in a FRILLY DRESS, BRASSY RED WIG and FALSIES.

MANNY’s CHARACTER joins in ... SNEEZING LOUDLY and causing ANN to take a SUDDEN PRAT FALL.

And so the ROUTINE BUILDS ... ANN and HARRY singing and dancing ... MANNY SNEEZING ... ANN falling.

The AUDIENCE look on with bored expressions on their faces. All except ONE MAN at the BACK, who is LAUGHING HYSTERICALLY.

CLOSE ON: ANN throwing everything into her ACT ... SWEAT rolls down her face ... she tries not to get distracted by the LAUGHING, WHEEZING MAN.

WIDER: A SMATTERING of APPLAUSE from the TINY AUDIENCE. 40 PEOPLE in a THEATRE designed for 500.

Crash cut:

INT. DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: MANNY in the NOISY, CROWDED DRESSING ROOM, which is full of VAUDEVILLE PERFORMERS in various stages of undress.

MANNY fires off a loud comical SNEEZE. He looks around at the others.

MANNY
That’s a funny one! Isn’t that funnier?

HARRY
It’s hysterical, Manny. As long as we’re laughing we won’t be crying over the box office. Talk about depressing.

ANGLE ON: ANN sitting down at a MIRROR, starting to take off her VEST ... a book entitled *“ISOLATION” by Jack Driscoll* lies half open on the counter top nearby...

ANN
Twenty girls in feather boas prancing around like circus ponies! That’s depressing!

ANGLE ON: MAUDE, a BLOWSY SINGER, lighting up a cigarette.

MAUDE
(fondly)
I love a good chorus line!

CLOSE ON: ANN brushing her HAIR. TAPS, a young tap dancer, leans across and picks up the book.

TAPS
What’s this?

ANN
It’s a play.

MANNY
Who wrote it, Annie?

TAPS
Some guy - Driscoll.
(reading the jacket of book)
From the Federal Theatre.

MAUDE
Don’t knock it, honey - at least they get an audience.

ANN
It’ll pick up .... Ain’t that right, Manny?

The DRESSING ROOM goes suddenly quiet ... MANNY looks away, refusing to meet ANN’s eye.

ANN (cont'd)
(trailing off)
It always does.

EXT. DRESSING ROOM ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

MANNY and ANN emerge from the STAGE DOOR, into an ALLEYWAY. Night and winter are setting in ...

MANNY splutters out another LOUD SNEEZE.

MANNY
The trick is to start the build right at the back of your throat...
(sneezing comically)
Works well out through the nose too.

ANN
Have you eaten today?

MANNY
(sheepish)
Oh, I’m not hungry. Don’t worry about me.

ANN
Hey - you’re all I’ve got.

ANN slips her arm through MANNY’S ...

ANN (cont’d)
Come on - take me to dinner.

MANNY
You think the kitchen’ll still be open on Third?

ANN
Soup and biscuits - perfect.

Cut to:

EXT. VAUDEVILLE THEATRE - DAY

WIDE ON: The VAUDEVILLE THEATRE. The DOOR is chained closed. WORKMEN are up ladders, taking the HOARDINGS down SIGN and putting a large sign up: *THEATRE CLOSED TILL FURTHER NOTICE ...*

ANN
(calling out to Harry)
Hey! Harry, what's going on?

ANGLE ON: ANN ... rattling the HEAVY STEEL CHAINS that are LOCKED around the DOORS to the VAUDEVILLE THEATRE ...

ANN(cont'd)
Hey, open up! We work here.

A WORKMAN up a LADDER smirks down at her.

LADDER MAN
Not anymore.

A MOTLEY collection of VAUDEVILLE PERFORMERS cluster on the SIDEWALK ... near them an incongruous assortment of PROPS and COSTUMES litter the STREET ...

MAUDE
(calling at some WORKMEN)
It's all right for you! We haven't had a pay check in two weeks - how we going to eat?

ANN
They're not going to get away with this.

CLOSE ON: MAUDE looks bleakly at ANN ...

MAUDE
They just did.

ANN tries to gather up PROPS - MANNY's BROOM, her TOP-HAT, HARRY'S parasol ...

MANNY (O.S.)
Ann ... Annie! It's no use.

ANN turns ... Manny is standing quietly to one side.

MANNY (cont'd)
The show it's over - it's done. I'm done. I'm leaving, Annie ... I'm going back to Chicago. I'm sorry ...

ANGLE ON: ANN stares at MANNY in shock ..

MANNY (cont’d)
I’m sorry, Ann. Ever since you were small people have been letting you down. But you gotta think of yourself now. You should try out for that part.

ANN looks at him warily ...

MANNY (cont'd)
It’s what you’ve always wanted. Oh, I know what you’re thinking - every time you reach out for something you care about ... fate comes along and snatches it away.

MANNY, grabs ANN’S hand ...

MANNY (cont’d)
But not this time, Annie ... not this time.

CLOSE ON: ANN as she digests MANNY’S words ... the LOUD rumble of an EL TRAIN thunders overhead ...

EXT. NY STREETS - DAY

ANGLE ON: WESTON, a NEW YORK THEATRE PRODUCER, strides out of his office, a copy of VARIETY tucked under his arm ...

ANN
(faux nonchalance)
Oh, hello Mr. Weston?!

WESTON turns and sees ANN ... he quickens his step.

WESTON
Oh, Jeez ...

ANGLE ON: ANN falls into step beside WESTON as he hurries along the BUSY SIDEWALK.

WESTON (cont’d)
Look, Miss ... I told you already; call my office - leave your resume with my secretary.

ANN doggedly follows WESTON ...

ANN
Why would I want to do that when we can talk about it in person?

WESTON
Because that’s what a smart girl would do.

ANN
But I already sent you my resume - you returned it unopened.

WESTON
What can I say? Jack Driscoll's very particular about who he works with.

ANN
Please, just an audition - that's all I'm asking.

WESTON
Jesus - you don't give up, do you?

ANN
Mr. Weston, I know this role backwards.

WESTON
Well, that's too bad - because we just gave the part to someone else. Sorry, kid - the play is cast.

They are standing outside an ITALIAN RESTAURANT ... WESTON goes to enter ...

ANN catches a glimpse of PLATES of FOOD and GLASSES of WINE. She quickly looks away. WESTON catches the glance and stops.

WESTON (cont'd)
Look - I know times are tough. You want my advice? Use what you got. You're not bad looking - a girl like you doesn't have to starve.

HOPE flickers in ANN'S EYES as WESTON fishes into his POCKET for a PEN and BUSINESS CARD. He scribbles down an address.

WESTON (cont'd)
There's a new place, just opened.
(handing to her)
Listen, princess - this gig ain't the Palace, you understand? Ask for Kenny K. Tell him I sent you.

WESTON hands her the BUSINESS CARD ... ANN looks down at the address, not recognizing it. She looks at him questioningly.

WESTON (cont'd)
(evasive)
Just play the date, take the money and forget you was ever there.

CLOSE ON: ANN staring down at the piece of paper in her hand.

INT. NY SCREENING ROOM - DAY

FLICKERING B&W IMAGES: TIGERS ROARING ... BRUCE BAXTER, in a PITH HELMET, stalking through undergrowth ... He raises his rifle and fires! CLICK! The gun is JAMMED. BRUCE turning to CAMERA, speaking soundlessly.

CLOSE ON: A SLEEPY looking LION. A PIECE of MEAT is lowered into frame ... DENHAM appears briefly holding the MEAT. He is attempting to STIR the yawning ANIMAL into life. CAMERA TILTS UP briefly revealing the bars of a CAGE. PRESTON'S FACE appears above a CLAPPER BOARD ... "TAKE 5"

CLOSE ON: CARL DENHAM sitting in the smoky SCREENING ROOM. He is nervous ... his eyes flick from one INVESTOR to the other ... trying to read the room.

ZELMAN
How much more is there?

ASSISTANT
Another five reels.

ZELMAN
Lights up.

Light floods the room as the washed out image on screen is extinguished.

DENHAM notices a sleazy looking INVESTOR wake up with a start.

THUGGISH INVESTOR
This is it? This is what we get for our forty grand, Denham? Another one of your Safari pictures?

SLEAZY INVESTOR
You promised us romantic scenes with Bruce Baxter and Maureen McKenzie.

DENHAM
Come on, fellas - you know the deal - we agreed to push Maureen's start date so she could get her teeth fixed.

THUGGISH INVESTOR
It's not the principle of the thing - it's the money.

ZELMAN
Carl - you've been in production for over two months -

DENHAM
Trust me, Bruce and Maureen are gonna steam up the screen - once we get them on the ship.

ZELMAN
What ship?

DENHAM
The one we've hired to get to the location.

DENHAM hurriedly pulls himself up - as ZELMAN turns on him.

ZELMAN
What location? Carl - you're supposed to be shooting on the back-lot.

DENHAM
Yes, I understand that - but fellas, we're not making that film anymore - and I'll tell you why.

DENHAM gets out of his SEAT and moves to the FRONT of the ROOM.

DENHAM (cont'd)
The story has changed, the script has been rewritten.

DENHAM turns to face the room, whipping a TATTERED MAP out of his pocket.

DENHAM (cont'd)
Life intervened! I've come into possession of a map.
(growing excitement)
The soul surviving record of an unchartered island, a place that was thought to exist only in myth ... until now!

ZELMAN
Whoa! Carl - slow down!

SLEAZY INVESTOR
Is he askin' for more money?

THUGISH INVESTOR
He's asking us to fund a wild goose-chase.

DENHAM
I'm talking about a primitive world ... never before seen by man! The ruins of an entire civilisation - the most spectacular thing you've ever seen!
(dramatiC pause)
That's where I'll shoot my picture!

SILENCE for a beat ... And then -

SLEAZY INVESTOR
Will there be boobies?

DENHAM is momentarily SPEECHLESS.

DENHAM
Excuse me, boobies?

SLEAZY INVESTOR
Jigglies, jablongers, bazoomers! ... In my experience people only go to these films to observe the ... undraped form of the native girls.

DENHAM
What are you - an idiot? You think they asked De Mille to waste his time on nudie shots? No - they respected the film maker, they showed some class! Not that you'd know what that means - you cheap low-life!

ZELMAN shifts uncomfortably in his seat as THUGGISH shoots him an ANGRY LOOK.

ZELMAN
Would you step outside for a moment, Carl?

DENHAM looks at them ... the INVESTORS avoid EYE CONTACT.

INT. SCREENING ROOM LOBBY - DAY

AS DENHAM STEPS INTO THE LOBBY, PRESTON, HIS LONG SUFFERING ASSISTANT WAITS ON A SOFA.

DENHAM points suddenly to the GLASS OF WATER on the TABLE next to PRESTON.

DENHAM
Gimme that - quick!

PRESTON hands him the WATER.

PRESTON
You won't like it, it's non-alcoholic!

DENHAM empties the GLASS into a POT PLANT.

DENHAM
Preston, you have a lot to learn about the motion picture business.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM quietly places the GLASS against the SCREENING ROOM DOOR, and presses his ear against it.

INT. NY SCREENING ROOM - DAY

ZELMAN looks to the INVESTORS.

ZELMAN
Don't write him off fellas. He's hot-headed sure, but Carl Denham's made some interesting pictures, he's had a lot of ... near success.

THUGGISH INVESTOR
(interrupts)
He’s a preening self promoter ...

INT. SCREENING ROOM LOBBY - DAY

CLOSE ON: DENHAM listening ...

THUGGISH INVESTOR (O.S.)
(through the door)
... an ambitious no-talent! The guy has “loser” written all over him.

ZELMAN (O.S.)
Look, I understand your disappointment.

THUGISH INVESTOR (O.S.)
He’s washed up - It’s all over town!

SLEAZY INVESTOR (O.S.)
He can’t direct. He doesn’t have the smarts.

INT. SCREENING ROOM LOBBY - DAY

THUGGISH INVESTOR
This jumped up little turd’s gonna bankrupt us.

ZELMAN
The animal footage has value?

SLEAZY INVESTOR
Sure ... Universal are desperate for stock footage.

THUGGISH INVESTOR
Then sell it! Scrap the picture! We gotta retrieve something from this debacle.

ZELMAN nods ... gestures to the YOUNG ASSISTANT.

ZELMAN
Get him back in.

ANGLE ON: The YOUNG ASSISTANT opens the DOOR, steps into the LOBBY which is ...

YOUNG ASSISTANT
Mr. Denham?

... EMPTY.

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - DAY

ANGLE ON: DENHAM and PRESTON hurrying down the CROWDED SIDEWALK - struggling under the weight of 8 FILM CANS! DENHAM is glancing back over his shoulder.

DENHAM
I want the cast and crew on the ship within the hour.

PRESTON
No Carl, you can’t do this!

DENHAM
Tell ‘em the studio’s pressured us into an early departure.

PRESTON
It’s not ethical!

DENHAM
What are they gonna do - sue me? They can get in line! I’m not going to let them kill my film.

ANGLE ON: PRESTON follows DENHAM, who steps off the curb ... and flags a CAB down. He cuts across the BUSY ROAD, PRESTON hurrying behind.

PRESTON
You realize none of the camera equipment is on board. We have no permits ... no visas ...

DENHAM
That’s why I have you, Preston.

PRESTON
We have no insurance, no foreign currency - in fact, we have no currency of any kind -

ANGLE ON: DENHAM looks back across the STREET and notices an angry INVESTOR heading towards him.

DENHAM
Get in there!

PRESTON suddenly finds himself BUNDLED into the back of a CAB.

PRESTON
Who’s gonna pay for the ship?

QUICK MOMENT: The SLEAZY INVESTOR grabs at the PARTIALLY OPEN BACK WINDOW of the CAB.

SLEAZY INVESTOR
Get out of there!

DENHAM hurriedly WINDS the WINDOW SHUT ... the SLEAZY INVESTOR yelps with PAIN, as he yanks his JAMMED FINGERS away from the CAB!

DENHAM
Step on it!

SLEAZY INVESTOR
(furious)
You’re finished, Denham!

ANGLE ON: PRESTON sprawled on the SEAT, amid a PILE of FILM CANS, as the CAB speeds away!

DENHAM
Don’t worry Preston - I’ve had a lot of practice at this: I’m real good at crapping the crappers.

CUT TO:

LATER ...

AERIAL WIDE: DENHAM’S CAB cruises along the CROWDED STREETS of NEW YORK.

DENHAM
And two dozen of Mr. Walker’s finest ...

PRESTON (O.S.)
Red label, 80% proof - packed in a crate marked “lemonade”.

INT. NY CAB - DAY

ANGLE ON: PRESTON and DENHAM sit on the BACK SEAT. PRESTON is feverishly scribbling on his NOTEPAD.

DENHAM
You got it ... and tell Maureen - she doesn’t have six hours to put on her face. If she wants to be in this picture, she’s gotta be on that boat!

PRESTON
She doesn’t want to be in this picture.

DENHAM looks at him blankly.

PRESTON (cont’d)
Maureen pulled out.

DENHAM
She pulled out?!

PRESTON
Yesterday. I told you.

DENHAM
(suspicious thought)
You said we were shooting in Singapore, right? That’s what you told her?

PRESTON
But we’re not shooting in Singapore.

DENHAM
(exasperation)
Goddammit, Preston! All you had to do is look her in the eye and lie.

DENHAM turns away, his brain whirring ... thinking hard ...

DENHAM (cont’d)
I gotta get to a phone ... talk to Harlow’s people.

PRESTON
She‘s unavailable.

HIGH WIDE: DENHAM’S CAB wends it’s way through BUSY NEW YORK streets ...

DENHAM (O.S.)
Myrna Loy? Clara Bow? Mae West?

PRESTON
Mae West?! No! She has to be a size four!

INT. NY CAB - DAY

ANGLE ON: PRESTON and DENHAM sit on the BACK SEAT.

PRESTON
You gotta get a girl who’ll fit Maureen’s costumes.

DENHAM
(sudden inspiration)
Fay’s a size four!

PRESTON
Yes she is, but she is doing a picture with RKO.

DENHAM looks away, muttering to himself ...

DENHAM
Cooper huh?
(darkly)
I might have known.

EXT. NY STREETS - DAY

ANGLE ON: The CAB screeches to a SUDDEN HALT in MID-TRAFFIC ... DENHAM jumps out, leaving PRESTON in protest ...

PRESTON
We gotta delay the shoot - shut production down ... We can’t sail tonight!

DENHAM
Not an option.

PRESTON
Carl!

DENHAM
I said I’d find a girl.

DENHAM turns and looks at PRESTON briefly.

DENHAM (cont’d)
For Godsake, Preston - think like a winner. Call Jack ... I need that Goddamn screenplay!

ANGLE ON: DENHAM leans in the window, PRESTON looks on PERPLEXED.

DENHAM (cont’d)
Defeat is always momentary.

DENHAM bangs the CAB ROOF with his hand, and then strides off confidently along the street.

EXT. BURLESQUE THEATRE - EVENING

CLOSE ON: A series of PHOTOS of SEMI NAKED WOMEN, with feather boas and peacock fans ... gaudy banners proclaiming Miss Lily Rose ... Delaware Du Boise ... Velvet Cushions ...

WIDER: DENHAM is standing outside a tacky BURLESQUE THEATRE. He straightens his tie and heads towards the DOOR.

ANGLE ON: A couple of LARGE GIRLS, followed by a SMALLER GIRL, arrive for work and enter the BURLESQUE THEATRE ... DENHAM eyes the BIGGER GIRLS, then chooses to follow the SMALLER ONE.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM is reaching for the DOOR HANDLE to go inside, when he suddenly pauses, his eye caught by the REFLECTION in the GLASS DOOR ...

CLOSE ON: ANN ... standing in the MIDDLE of the SIDEWALK. She is unaware of DENHAM watching her. ANN stares grimly at the BURLESQUE HOARDINGS, the FLYER clutched in her hands, a small knot of anger forming in her stomach.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM’s HAND lets go of the DOOR. His eyes lock on ANN through the sea of PEDESTRIANS.

ANN angrily CRUMPLES the FLYER, drops it in the GUTTER and walks away from the THEATRE.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM ... watching her leave.

EXT. FRUIT STALL - EVENING

A BUSY FRUIT STALL on the SIDEWALK. The VENDOR is hurriedly handing out APPLES and pocketing NICKELS.

ANGLE ON: ANN walks slowly by ... her eyes on the FRUIT. She glances at the VENDOR, SWIPES an APPLE from the TRAY, and quickly moves on, slipping the APPLE into her POCKET.

ANN'S arm is suddenly GRABBED! The ANGRY VENDOR pulls her hand out of her pocket, which is still clutching the stolen apple.

VENDOR
(angry)
You gonna pay for this?

ANN tries to pull away. The VENDOR's grip on her arm tightens.

DENHAM (O.S.)
Excuse me ...

ANGLE ON: DENHAM steps up behind them up HOLDING a NICKEL ...

DENHAM (cont'd)
Ma'am, I think you dropped this.

ANGLE ON: THE VENDOR snatches the NICKEL from DENHAM'S fingers.

INT. NY DINER - EVENING

ANGLE ON: ANN is eating from a FULL PLATE, trying to disguise her HUNGER. DENHAM walks over carrying a CUP of COFFEE.

DENHAM
Vaudeville huh? I worked Vaudeville once... that is a tough audience. If you don't kill them fast, they kill you.

ANN
Mr. Denham - I want you to know that I'm not in the habit of accepting charity from strangers, or for that matter ... taking things that don't belong to me.

DENHAM
It was obviously a terrible misunderstanding.

ANN
It's just that, I haven't been paid in a while ...

DENHAM
(mock sincerity)
That’s awful. Anyway, Ann - may I call you Ann?

DENHAM leans forward ... lowering his voice.

DENHAM (cont’d)
... You wouldn’t happen to be a size four by any chance?

ANN pauses mid way through a mouthful of food, her appetite suddenly draining away. She abruptly stands.

DENHAM (cont’d)
No! Oh God, no! You’ve got me all wrong. Miss Darrow, please! I’m not that type of person at all!

ANN
What type of person are you?

DENHAM
I’m someone you can trust, Ann. I’m a movie producer.
(sincere)
Believe me, I am on the level, no funny business. Please, sit down - Please ... Please.

ANN hesitates a moment before sitting down once again.

DENHAM (cont’d)
(pitching the film)
Ann, I want you to imagine a handsome explorer bound for the Far East.

ANN
You’re filming in the Far East?

ANGLE ON: DENHAM looking her in the eye and lying.

DENHAM
Singapore. On board ship he meets a mysterious girl. She’s beautiful ... she’s fragile ... haunted ...

ANN looks up ... caught by the tale DENHAM is weaving.

DENHAM (cont’d)
She can’t escape the feeling that forces beyond her control are compelling her down a road from which she cannot draw back. It’s as if her whole life has been a prelude to this moment - this fateful meeting that changes everything. And sure enough, against her better judgement -

ANN
She falls in love.

DENHAM
Yes!

ANN
But she doesn’t trust it. She’s not even sure if she believes in love.

DENHAM
Oh really?

ANN
If she loves someone - it’s doomed.

DENHAM
Why is that?

ANN
Good things never last, Mr. Denham.

An awkward pause ... ANN looks away, having revealed too much. DENHAM considers her a beat, realising something ...

DENHAM
So you’re interested?

ANGLE ON: DENHAM hurriedly gathering up his hat and coat.

DENHAM (cont’d)
That’s settled then. I don’t want to rush you - but we are under some time pressure here.

ANN
Well I really -

DENHAM
Ann? I’m telling you, You’re perfect - look at you! You’re the saddest girl I ever met ... you’re gonna make ‘em weep, Ann - you’re gonna break their hearts!

ANN
See, that’s where you’re wrong, Mr. Denham, I make people laugh, that’s what I do.

ANN suddenly STANDS.

ANN (cont’d)
Good luck with your picture.

DENHAM follows ANN to the DOOR ...

DENHAM
(growing desperation)
Ann! Miss Darrow! Please!

DENHAM(cont'd)
I’m offering you money, adventure, fame ... the thrill of a lifetime and a long sea voyage. You wanna read a script? Jack Driscoll’s turning in a draft as we speak.

ANN stops and turns.

ANN
Jack Driscoll?

DENHAM
Sure. Why - wait! You know him?

ANN
Well, no - not personally. I’ve seen his plays.

DENHAM, sensing her interest, starts to get excited.

DENHAM
What a writer, huh? And let me tell you Ann, Jack Driscoll doesn’t want just anyone starring in this picture. He said to me, “Carl, somewhere out there is a woman born to play this role ...”
(quiet realization)
And as soon as I saw you, I knew -

ANN
(uneasy)
Knew what?

DENHAM
It was always going to be you.

SLOW PUSH IN on ANN as she realises she is standing on the brink of a life changing moment.

EXT. NY DOCKS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: The CROWDED DOCKS ... a clutter of SHIPS and SHANTY TOWNS. A CAB drives onto the DOCKS. DENHAM hops out and holds the door open for ANN, who emerges carrying a BATTERED SUITCASE.

ANN stares at a LARGE OCEAN GOING LINER that rises above her.

ANN
(awestruck)
Is this the moving picture ship?

DENHAM
Not exactly ... it’s actually this one over here.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM is striding towards a RUSTY BATTERED TRAMP STEAMER on the OTHER SIDE of the WHARF! This is “The Venture”.

DENHAM (cont'd)
Don't let appearances deceive you. It's much more spacious on board.

HAYES
Haul away ...

ROUGH looking SAILORS are working hard to get the boat under way. Hurried activity everywhere, crates being loaded; smoke begins pouring from the stacks ...

DENHAM crosses and talks to MIKE and HERB who stand next to some film gear.

DENHAM
Is this all of the equipment? This is all of it? We're taking the Bell and Howell? Good. You got all the lenses - you got the two and the six?

PRESTON (O.S.)
Carl!

DENHAM
Yes -
(to MIKE and HERB)
Get it on board, fellas. Come on.

ANGLE ON: PRESTON hurrying down the GANGWAY. He rushes up to DENHAM ... his eyes flick to ANN, but he pulls DENHAM to one side.

PRESTON
(urgent whisper)
They're on their way. I've just had word.

DENHAM
Who?

PRESTON
(whisper)
Men in uniform. The studio called the cops!

A FLASH of FEAR crosses DENHAM'S FACE ... DENHAM calls across to a TALL FIGURE who is supervising the loading of the ship.

DENHAM
Englehorn! Cast off! Hoist up the mainsail - raise the anchor, whatever the hell it is you do - we gotta leave.

ENGLEHORN
I cannot do that ... we're waiting on the manifest.

DENHAM
What? Who? English - please!

ENGLEHORN
(dryly)
Paperwork, Mr. Denham.

DENHAM leans in conspiratorially ...

DENHAM
(low voice)
I'll give you another thousand to leave right now.

ENGLEHORN
You haven't given me the first thousand yet.

DENHAM glances at ANN, flustered and embarrassed.

DENHAM
Can we talk about this later. Can't you see we're in the company of a VIP guest?

ENGLEHORN's gaze falls upon ANN ...

ENGLEHORN
Ma'am...

ANN
Ann Darrow.

ENGLEHORN
So you are ready for this voyage, Miss Darrow?

ANN
Sure...

ENGLEHORN
Nervous?

ANN
Nervous - no. Why? Should I be?

ANN looks taken aback ...

ENGLEHORN
It isn't every woman who would take such a risk.

DENHAM throws PRESTON a look!

PRESTON
(hurriedly)
Why don't I show Miss Darrow to her cabin?

DENHAM
Wonderful idea, thank you, Preston.

PRESTON
Miss Darrow, if you'd just - Hi, my name is Preston, Carl's assistant.

DENHAM pulls his CHEQUE BOOK from his JACKET POCKET.

DENHAM
Two thousand - it's a deal ... Will you take a cheque?

ENGLEHORN
Do I have a choice?

EXT. VENTURE/NY DOCKS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: PRESTON goes to lead ANN up the GANG WAY past some rough-looking sailors, onto the SHIP - "THE VENTURE".

PRESTON
Please, follow me. If there's anything that you need ... 'excuse me fellas, if there's anything that you need please don't hesitate to ... ask ...

PRESTON turns back to see ANN hesitating at the bottom of the GANG WAY ... an unnerved expression on her face ...

ANN steps forward ... Deep breath, she follows PRESTON.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - NIGHT

BEEFY SAILORS shovel COAL into the SHIP'S FURNACE ... another cranks a valve on the pistons.

INT. DENHAM'S CABIN - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: DENHAM enters his CABIN looking FLUSTERED. He is STARTLED to find JACK DRISCOLL waiting for him. DRISCOLL is a WRITER, well dressed in a SHABBY sort of way.

DENHAM
Jesus, Jack - you scared me!

DENHAM crosses to a cabinet and breaks into a CRATE OF JOHNNY WALKER.

DENHAM (cont'd)
Listen, if anyone comes to the door, don't open it. You haven't seen me ... say I got depressed and committed suicide. Say I stuck my head down a toilet!
(holding up a bottle)
You want one?

JACK
No! I can’t stay, Carl. I have a rehearsal for which I am now ...
(checks WATCH)
... three hours late.

JACK throws a FEW SCRIPT PAGES across the TABLE.

DENHAM
What’s this?

JACK
It’s the script.

DENHAM
This is a script? Jack ... this is fifteen pages.

JACK
I know - but they’re good! You’ve got fifteen good pages there, Carl!

DENHAM
I’m supposed to be making a feature length picture.

JACK
You told me I had more time. I’m sorry. Look I gotta go.

DENHAM
Jack - No - you can’t do this to me! I have a beginning but I need a middle and an end! I gotta have something to shoot.

The SHIP’S ENGINES roar into life ... JACK stands to leave.

JACK
You got my notes - I gotta go. See you.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM looking DISMAYED. He stares blankly at the RUSH of ACTIVITY through the PORTHOLE WINDOW behind JACK.

POV: The VENTURE’S CREW hurriedly RELEASE ROPES in preparation for the ship’s imminent departure.

DENHAM’S expression slowly CHANGES ...

DENHAM
Alright, fine. We might as well settle up.

JACK looks ASTONISHED as DENHAM pulls out his CHEQUE BOOK.

JACK
You’re going to pay me?

DENHAM
I’m not going to stiff a friend.

JACK
I’ve never known you to volunteer cash before ...

DENHAM
How does two grand sound?

JACK
Sounds great!

DENHAM
Thought it might.

DENHAM’S eyes flick to the WINDOW ... sees SAILORS are hauling up the GANGPLANK.

ANGLE ON: A SAILOR CRANKS a series of VALVES as the SHIP’S PISTONS crank in to life.

DENHAM signs the CHEQUE, and hands it over with a FLOURISH ...

DENHAM (cont’d)
(signing with a flourish)
Voila!

JACK snatches the CHEQUE and turns to leave.

JACK
Thanks...

JACK glances at it.

JACK (cont’d)
Carl ... you’ve written “Two Grand”.

DENHAM takes the CHEQUE back ...

DENHAM
So I did ... Sorry about that
(screwing it up)
Let’s start from the beginning.

DENHAM (cont'd)
(writing)
“Two Thousand Dollars” ...

ANGLE ON: The ship’s PISTONS PUMP faster.

DENHAM looks up at JACK, a confused look on his face.

DENHAM (cont'd)
It is the 29th, isn’t it?

JACK
(anxious)
Come on - it’s the 25th, Carl, the 25th!

ANGLE ON: JACK suddenly realises the SHIP is about to leave.

DENHAM
I’m sorry. Let me just ... It’ll just take a second.

DENHAM screws up the CHEQUE again! The VIBRATION of the ENGINES picks up. JACK heads for the DOOR!

JACK
Never mind, pay me when you get back!

DENHAM
(knowing)
Alright ... okay ...

INT. ENGINE ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: THE SHIPS GAUGES SPRING INTO ACTION.

EXT. VENTURE STERN

CRANE DOWN the stern of the ship as the PROPELLER kicks into action.

INT. SHIP’S CORRIDOR - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: BRUCE BAXTER walking along the CORRIDOR, with PRESTON following behind laden with LUGGAGE. BRUCE is in his early thirties ... He is QUICK WITTED, SOPHISTICATED and CHARMING... but his career as a SCREEN ACTOR has badly stalled.

PRESTON
Your cabin’s just down here, Mr. Baxter. May I say how excited we are to have you back with us, Sir.

ANGLE ON: JACK is hurrying down the corridor towards the DOOR. He feels the SHIP MOVING! He suddenly collides with BRUCE, who thrusts a SUITCASE at him.

BRUCE
Be a sport and lend us a hand.

JACK
Oh, Christ!

JACK looks desperately out of the PORTHOLE, doubles back and BOLTS AWAY.

BRUCE
(dryly)
Appreciate the help, fella.

PRESTON
Let me get the door for you - welcome to your state room sir.

INT. BRUCE’S CABIN - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: BRUCE is clearly unimpressed with the TINY CABIN. He reacts to the SMELL.

PRESTON
I know, that’s not a nice smell is it? I’m sure it’ll disperse in a day or two. Did I ever mention how much I love your work, Mr. Baxter? I’ve seen every one of your pictures ... even the silent ones.

BRUCE
I haven’t made any silent ones.

BRUCE gently closes the DOOR in PRESTON’S FACE - leaving him silently CURSING to himself in the CORRIDOR.

EXT. VENTURE WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: The PROPELLER CHURNS through the WATER ...

ENGLEHORN watches the VENTURE pull away from the dock ... Satisfied, he enters the WHEELHOUSE ...

ENGLEHORN
Dead slow ahead both, Mr Hayes.

HAYES
Dead slow ahead both, Captain.

EXT. VENTURE/NY DOCKS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK emerges from the labyrinthine SHIP INTERIOR and rushes to the RAIL of the SHIP ... he freezes in HORROR!

JACK
Oh Christ!

ANGLE ON: The SHIP is PULLING AWAY from the DOCK ... 6 feet ... 7 feet ... JACK contemplates JUMPING for a MOMENT:

JACK (cont’d)
Goddammit!

EXT. NY DOCKS

POLICE CARS race along the docks towards the VENTURE, SIRENS wailing.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - NIGHT

JACK SLUMPS on the DECK in DESPAIR. He’s missed his chance to get off the ship.

DENHAM steps up behind JACK, just as a POLICE CAR, followed by ZELMAN and the INVESTORS, pull up on the DOCKS in the DISTANCE.

DENHAM
I keep telling you, Jack, there’s no money in theatre.

CUT TO:

EXT. NY DOCKS - NIGHT

The INVESTORS leap out of the car.

SLEAZY INVESTOR
No, no, no!

EXT. VENTURE DECK - NIGHT

The VENTURE steams past the LIGHTS of MANHATTAN.

DENHAM
You’re much better off sticking with film.

JACK
I don’t do it for the money, Carl. I happen to love the theatre.

DENHAM
No, you don’t.

JACK looks at him exasperated as DENHAM casually taps his PIPE on the RAIL of the BOAT.

DENHAM (cont’d)
If you really loved it, you would have jumped.

EXT. NY DOCKS - NIGHT

WIDE ON: ZELMAN throws his hat to the ground in anger as THE VENTURE pulls away from the docks.

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOUR - NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VENTURE steams away from the DOCKS, passing under the MANHATTAN BRIDGE.

INT. ANN’S CABIN - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: ANN tests her mattress with her hands. ANN straightens & turns, perching on the edge of the BUNK.

PRESTON
(apologetic)
I hope you find it to your liking... it’s quite comfortable. Your towels and linens are underneath the bed. That is the wash basin. I know, that’s not a pleasant smell - is it? I’m sure it’ll disperse in a day or two.

PRESTON dances over to the WARDROBE.

PRESTON (cont’d)
The closet ... your costumes - I hope you’ll find everything is in order. If there is anything that you need, please do not hesitate to ask...fresh water, perhaps? I can bring it to you personally.

PRESTON is interrupted by a knock on the CABIN DOOR...

ANGLE ON: The DOOR opens and DENHAM enters. He thrusts a bottle of JOHNNY WALKER SCOTCH into ANN’S HANDS ...

DENHAM
Knock knock! We can’t have our leading lady deprived of the necessities of life.
(to PRESTON)
Do me a favour - run a bottle down to Jack. It’ll fend off his migraine.

PRESTON
They’re still trying to find a place for him to sleep.

DENHAM
(to PRESTON)
You told him my typewriter is available for hire?

PRESTON
Yes - he didn’t take it well.

PRESTON departs down the corridor.

ANN
(confused)
Mr. Driscoll ...?

DENHAM turns and looks at ANN.

ANN (cont’d)
He’s on board?

DENHAM
Jack has his heart set on coming. Call me a softie - I couldn’t say no.

INT. SHIPS HOLD - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: CHOY is showing JACK to his sleeping QUARTERS, carrying BLANKETS.

JACK stares in DISBELIEF at the DINGY HOLD strewn with STRAW BALES and EMPTY ANIMAL CAGES. He reacts to the SMELL.

CHOY
This room very comfortable, plenty dim light ... fresh straw.

JACK
What’d you keep down here?

CHOY
Lion, tiger, hippo - you name it.

Jack
What, do you sell them to Zoos?

CHOY
Zoos ... circus ...
(lowers voice)
Skipper get big money for rare animal.
(alarmed)
Careful! Camel have bad accident on floor. Stain unremovable ...

JACK looks down. He’s standing in a dark, viscous PUDDLE OF GUNGE.

CHOY (cont’d)
(lowers voice)
Skipper catch any animal you want. He do you real good price on rhite wino.

ENGLEHORN
(sternly)
Choy!

ANGLE ON: CHOY clams up as ENGLEHORN strolls into the hold.

ENGLEHORN (cont'd)
My apologies for not being able to offer you a cabin. Have you found an enclosure to your taste?

JACK
(dryly)
Spoilt for choice.

ENGLEHORN surveys a COUPLE OF LARGE CAGES.

ENGLEHORN
What are you, Mr. Driscoll, a lion or a chimpanzee?

JACK opens a CAGE large enough to sleep in.

JACK
Maybe, I'll take this one.

He steps back with SURPRISE as a WOODEN CRATE TOPPLES, spilling out a LARGE MEDICAL BOTTLE. CHOY looks up in SHOCK as the BOTTLE ROLLS towards ENGLEHORN who coolly TRAPS it with his FOOT.

ENGLEHORN
I told you to lock it up.

CHOY
(scared)
Sorry, Skipper! Lumpy said -

ENGLEHORN
(interrupts)
Lumpy doesn't give the orders. What are you trying to do? Put the whole ship to sleep? Get them out of here!

ENGLEHORN hands the BOTTLE to a nervous CHOY. JACK stares at the CRATES stacked in the CAGE.

CLOSE ON: Piles of BOTTLES, all marked "Chloroform".

EXT. VENTURE - DAY

WIDE ON: The VENTURE ploughs through a HEAVY SWELL.

INT. BRUCE'S CABIN - DAY

ANGLE ON: BRUCE pins movie posters from some of his previous films on his cabin wall ... He steps back, admiring them.

INT. SHIPS HOLD - DAY

ANGLE ON: JACK, sitting in the hold, TAPPING on an OLD TYPEWRITER propped up on BOXES. He is clearly very QUEASY, as he tries to stay focussed on the TYPEWRITER KEYS.

He sees JIMMY carrying a TRAY come into view, he COUGHS and CLAMS UP.

JIMMY
Compliments of the chef -

ANGLE ON: JIMMY unloading the BOWLS of GREY looking STEW from the TRAY.

CLOSE ON: JIMMY puts the BOWL next to JACK ... who takes one look at it, and SQUEEZES his eyes closed.

JACK (O.S.)
Oh Christ - oh God!

JIMMY
Lambs brains in walnut sauce.

The CAGES and ROPES SWAY with each roll of the WAVES ... JIMMY walks away.

ANGLE ON: JACK looking very nauseated ...

HAYES (O.S.)
Jimmy!

JIMMY spins round, a guilty look on his face.

HAYES (cont'd)
You run those ropes up on deck like I told you?

JIMMY
Doing it now, Mr. Hayes.

ANGLE ON: JIMMY tries to slip past, but HAYES grabs his WRIST.

HAYES
How about you return Mr. Driscoll's pen first?

CLOSE ON: An expensive FOUNTAIN PEN drops from JIMMY'S HAND and clatters to the floor. QUICK as an eel, JIMMY scampers AWAY.

HAYES shakes his head, and picks up the PEN ... hands it back.

HAYES (cont'd)
He doesn't mean any harm. I'll keep him out of your way.

JACK
No, it's okay.

HAYES
It's just he likes it down here, it's where I found him ... four years ago ... stowed away in one of them cages. His arm was broken in two places, he was wilder than half the animals in here. Still won't tell me where he came from - all I know, it wasn't any place good.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - DAY

ANGLE ON: JIMMY is sorting NETS up on DECK. Nearby HAYES rests against the railing.

HAYES
You gotta straighten up. You don't want to be on this ship for the rest of your life.

JIMMY
I do.

HAYES
No, you don’t, Jimmy. You wanna get yourself educated. Give yourself some options. Take this serious.

JIMMY
I do, Mr. Hayes, I do! Look, I’ve been readin’.

JIMMY pulls a battered book out of his coat pocket. HAYES takes the book. It has a painting of a TRAMP STEAMER on the cover and the title: HEART OF DARKNESS by Joseph Conrad.

HAYES
Where did you get this?

JIMMY
(prevaricating)
I borrowed it ...

HAYES flicks the book open and sees “Property of New York Public Library” stamped on the interior of the dust jacket.

JIMMY (cont'd)
... on long term loan. Look at this.

JIMMY points to the printed byline on the back of the book.

JIMMY (cont’d)
“Adventures on a Tramp Steamer”. See - just like us.

EXT. VENTURE/OCEAN

WIDE ON: The VENTURE as it cuts through open OCEAN.

INT. ANN’S CABIN - DAY

ANN is holding a copy of JACK’S PLAY “ISOLATION” ... she is standing in front of a mirror rehearsing her introduction.

ANN
It’s nice to meet you Mr. Driscoll - I’m actually quite familiar with your work.
(trying again)
Oh yes! ... Hello, Mr Driscoll - it’s so nice to meet you! Actually, I’m quite familiar with your work. I’m a huge fan!
(one more time)
I’ve read everything you’ve ever written.

ANN’S face falls in DESPAIR - she can’t get rid of her nerves about meeting the famous JACK DRISCOLL.

INT. MESS ROOM - DAY

A few sailors are finishing BREAKFAST.

PRESTON, HERB and MIKE are seated at a TABLE.

ANGLE ON: MIKE packing away his HEADPHONES and SOUND RECORDING EQUIPMENT.

MIKE
I'm gonna have the ships' engines all over the dialogue - sea gulls, camera noise, wind and Christ knows what else!

DENHAM
I don't care, Mike! You're the sound recordist - make it work.

ANGLE ON: ANN in the CHIFFON DRESS, hesitating in the doorway of the MESS.

DENHAM looks up and signals her over.

DENHAM (cont'd)
Ann! Come on in! Let me introduce you to the crew! This is Herb - our cameraman ...

ANN reaches out to shake HERB'S hand.

HERB
Delighted to meet you, ma'am. And may I say what a lovely dress.

ANN
Oh! This old thing! I just - threw it on!

PRESTON
(confused to DENHAM)
Isn't that one of Maureen's costumes?

ANN
(hurriedly)
What does a girl have to do round here to get some breakfast!

DENHAM
Lumpy! You heard the lady!

ANGLE ON: LUMPY looking up. He is simultaneously shaving a SAILOR and stirring PORRIDGE.

LUMPY
Fancy some of me ... ah ... Porridge aux walnuts?

DENHAM turns back to ANN, who is staring at MIKE, who has his head down, scribbling in a NOTEBOOK.

DENHAM
Ann, I don't believe you've met -

ANN
That's alright Mr. Denham, I know who this is ...

ANGLE ON: ANN, who is staring at MIKE in quiet awe. He glances up at her, nervously.

ANN (cont'd)
Thrilled to meet you. It's an honour - to be part of this.

MIKE
(bewildered)
Gee, thanks!

ANN
Actually - I am quite familiar with your work.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM raises a quizzical EYEBROW.

MIKE
Really?

ANN
Yes, and what I most admire - is the way you have captured the voice of the common people.

MIKE
Well - that's my job.

ANN
I'm sure you've heard this before, Mr Driscoll, if you don't mind me saying - you don't look at all like your photograph ...

ANGLE ON: JACK at the bar, holding a cup of COFFEE. He turns and glances at ANN.

MIKE
Excuse me?

DENHAM
Wait a minute! Ann -

ANN
(to DENHAM)
Well, he's so much younger - in person.
(turning back to MIKE)
And much better looking.

JACK starts to walk over to the table.

DENHAM
Ann! Stop! Stop - right there -

ANGLE ON: MIKE staring past ANN'S shoulder.

ANN
I was afraid you might be one of those self obsessed literary types. You know - the tweedy twerp with his nose in a book and his head up his -

JACK snaps his BOOK closed. ANN turns around ... her face drops. JACK looks at ANN, who stares at him MORTIFIED.

JACK
It's nice to meet you too, Miss Darrow..

INT. SHIP'S CORRIDOR/BRUCE'S CABIN - DAY

BRUCE bumps into JIMMY who hurries away looking shifty.

BRUCE enters his CABIN ... A moustache has been drawn on all his POSTERS. BRUCE looks annoyed ... then takes another look.

CLOSE ON: BRUCE glancing in the mirror - imaging himself with a moustache. Not bad.

EXT. VENTURE - DAY

WIDE ON: The VENTURE ploughs through a HEAVY SWELL.

DENHAM (V.O.)
She's standing at the railing ... she doesn't know it yet, but they're sailing towards disaster. You got that?

JACK (V.O.)
She turns ... The First Mate is staggering towards her - there's a knife sticking out of his back!

INT. SHIPS HOLD

ANGLE ON: JACK, sitting in the hold, TAPPING on an OLD TYPEWRITER propped up on BOXES. He is clearly very QUEASY, as he tries to stay focussed on the TYPEWRITER KEYS.

DENHAM is pacing the HOLD, sucking on a PIPE.

DENHAM
Wait a second, we're killing off the First Mate?

JACK
That’s assuming she knows who the First Mate is.

DENHAM
Come on, Jack! It was an honest mistake. Ann is near-sighted - it could happen to anyone.

JACK
I was joking, Carl.

DENHAM
The point is: she’s horrified. She has to look away. And that’s when she sees it.

JACK
See’s what? What?

ANGLE ON: Unseen by either DENHAM or JACK, JIMMY has snuck down in to the HOLD ...

DENHAM
(dramatic)
The island.

JACK
(taken aback)
We’re filming on an island now? When did this happen?

DENHAM
Jack, keep your voice down! I don’t want the crew getting spooked.

JACK
Why would they get spooked? What’s it called?

DENHAM looks SHIFTY.

DENHAM
All right ... It has a local name, but I’m warning you, Jack, it doesn’t sound good.

ANGLE ON: JIMMY, his attention caught as he eavesdrops on the conversation.

JACK looks at DENHAM in GROWING FRUSTRATION.

DENHAM (cont’d)
(quietly)
They call it ...
(muffled)

JIMMY POV: DENHAM leaning in and murmuring to JACK.

JACK
What’s wrong with this place?

DENHAM
There’s nothing officially wrong with it. Because technically it hasn’t been discovered yet.

JACK gives up, feeling too seasick to argue ...

JACK
(resuming typing)
Okay ... alright ... so we arrive at this place ...
(typing)
S ... k ... u ...

CLOSE ON: DENHAM looks up in time to see JIMMY listening ... Their eyes meet ... DENHAM tries to hush JACK - too late.

JACK (cont’d)
l ... l ... Island.

EXT. VENTURE/OCEAN - DAY

ANGLE ON: The SHIP moves through GREY SEAS ... Dolphins swim alongside.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - DAY

WIDE ON: DENHAM is FILMING ANN and BRUCE. Clustered around are his crew, HERB and MIKE and PRESTON.

DENHAM
All right everyone, from the top. And ... action!

ANGLE ON: BRUCE saunters up to ANN, who is leaning on the rail, staring out to sea, in full hair and make-up.

ANN
I think this is awfully exciting! I’ve never been on a ship before.

BRUCE
I’ve never been on one with a woman before.

ANN
I guess you don’t think much of women on ships, do you?

BRUCE
No, they’re a nuisance.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM looking intently at JIMMY and HAYES who are further down the DECK ... talking quietly.

ANGLE ON: HAYES shoots DENHAM an ALARMED LOOK.

ANN (O.S.)
Well, I'll try not to be.

BRUCE (O.S.)
Just being around is trouble.

ANN (O.S.)
Well! Is that a nice thing to say!

BRUCE (O.S.)
It's a dangerous thing, having girls on ships. They're messy and they're unreliable!

DENHAM
(distracted)
Cut! Great!

ANGLE ON: DENHAM'S gaze returns to JIMMY and HAYES who are huddled in a group with three more SAILORS ... word is travelling fast.

DENHAM (cont'd)
Bruce, wonderful performance. You can relax for ten minutes.

ANGLE ON: BRUCE looking pretty pleased with himself.

DENHAM (cont'd)
That was very natural... I felt moved.

JACK looks on in disbelief.

ANGLE ON: BRUCE walking past JACK ...

BRUCE
What do you think, Driscoll? The dialogue's got some flow now - huh?

JACK
It was pure effluence.

BRUCE
I beefed up the banter ...

JACK
Try to resist that impulse.

BRUCE
It's just a little humor, Bud - what are you, a Bolshevik or something?

JACK watches as BRUCE saunters off ... he turns back to DENHAM.

JACK
Actors. They travel the world but all they ever see is a mirror!

JACK looks up to see ANN looking dismayed, a MIRROR COMPACT, in her hand ...

She quickly snaps the COMPACT shut and turns away.

CLOSE ON: JACK - taken aback.

INT. SHIP'S CORRIDOR - DAY

ANN is making her way to the BATHROOM. She looks up as JACK rounds a corner coming the other way. They walk toward each other.

SUDDENLY the ship sways, JACK is thrown forward, but ANN manages to hold her BALANCE.

JACK
Good legs.

ANN looks at him SHARPLY.

JACK (cont'd)
Sea legs - I meant - you know ... sea legs. Not that you don't have good legs, I was just ...

JACK trails off as ANN edges past him, averting her eyes.

JACK (cont'd)
... making conversation. Jesus!
(calling)
Miss Darrow!

ANN stops and turns ...

JACK (cont'd)
About the scene - today, with you and Bruce -

ANN
I know, it wasn't what you wrote. But Mr Baxter felt very strongly that when a man likes a woman - then he must ignore her. And if things turn really hostile ... no?

JACK
Interesting theory.

ANN
I know ... I should have -

JACK
It wasn't what I had intended ... but it -

ANN
I'm sorry - I was ...

JACK
You made it your own ...

ANN
I was nervous.

JACK
It was funny, actually ... you were funny.

ANN
Please - don’t say another word. Good night.

ANN goes to close her CABIN DOOR.

JACK
Miss Darrow ...

ANN looks at him.

JACK (cont’d)
You don’t have to be nervous.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - SUNSET

CLOSE ON: DENHAM standing behind the CAMERA with HERB and MIKE. DENHAM is caught up in the scene and is EMOTING FURIOUSLY.

ANGLE ON: ANN RUNNING out on to the DECK of the VENTURE in a GLITTERING GOWN. She is SIGHING and CRYING in a MELODRAMATIC kind of way ...

ANGLE ON: JACK approaching, he is reading pages in his HAND, he looks up just as ...

ANN turns, TEARS on her cheeks.. lit by the GOLDEN RAYS of the SETTING SUN.

ANN stares at JACK, momentarily forgetting where she is. He stares back at her.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM catching the EXCHANGE of LOOKS. He takes the script pages off JACK and shoos him away ...

EXT. WHEELHOUSE - DUSK

ANGLE ON: DENHAM & ENGLEHORN talk out the front of the WHEELHOUSE.

INT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: ENGLEHORN’S POV of SHIPPING CHARTS.

DENHAM
We’re close. Head south-west.

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN leaning over SHIPPING CHARTS. DENHAM hovers nearby in the doorway.

ENGLEHORN
There’s no land south-west for thousands of miles. It takes us way outside the shipping lanes.

ENGLEHORN turns and confronts DENHAM.

ENGLEHORN (cont’d)
I won’t sail blind in these waters.

DENHAM
I’ll make it worth your while.

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN ... tempted by the offer of more money, but his instincts are telling him to not to agree.

ENGLEHORN
There’s nothing out there.

DENHAM
Then you’ve nothing to lose.

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN: conflicted.

EXT. VENTURE/OCEAN - DUSK

WIDE ON: THE VENTURE steams on as the SUN falls slowly behind the horizon ...

INT. MESS ROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: DENHAM & PRESTON are seated at a table, talking quietly.

ANGLE ON: HAYES enters the MESS ... HAYES saunters over to PRESTON & DENHAM.

HAYES
If someone were to tell you this ship is headed for Singapore, what would you say?

ANGLE ON: LUMPY is standing quietly honing a knife with a whet-stone ... it makes a sharp sound ...

LUMPY
I would say they was full of it, Mr. Hayes. We turned south-west last night.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM looks up sharply ... HAYES is standing over him.

DENHAM
Gentlemen please, we’re not looking for trouble -

ANGLE ON: JIMMY enters the MESS from behind him...

JIMMY
No. You’re looking for something else ...

PRESTON glances warily at DENHAM. DENHAM takes in the situation and decides to front up.

DENHAM
(quietly)
Yes .... we are. We’re gonna find Skull Island! We’re gonna find it, film it and show it to the world. For twenty five cents you get to see the last blank space on the map!

LUMPY
I wouldn’t be so sure of that.

PRESTON
What do you mean?

LUMPY
Seven years ago, me and Mr Hayes - we were working our passage on a Norwegian barque.

HAYES
We picked up a castaway - found him in the water - he’d been drifting for days.

LUMPY
His ship had run aground on an island, way West of Sumatra. An island hidden in fog. He spoke of a huge wall, built so long ago - no one knew who had made it ... A wall a hundred foot high ... as strong today as it was, ages ago.

PRESTON
Why did they build the wall?

SILENCE ...

LUMPY
The castaway - he spoke of a creature, neither beast nor man, but something monstrous, living behind that wall...

DENHAM
A lion or a tiger. A man-eater. That’s how all these stories start.

PRESTON
(to LUMPY)
What else did he say?

LUMPY
Nothing. We found him the next morning ... he’d stuck a knife through his heart.

ANGLE ON: PRESTON looking ASHEN ... DENHAM breaks the GRIM MOOD.

DENHAM
Sorry fellas, you’ll have to do better than that. Monsters belong in B movies!

ANGLE ON: PRESTON & DENHAM making a rapid exit.

HAYES
If you find this place -

DENHAM and PRESTON stop and turn back ...

HAYES (cont'd)
If you go ashore with your friends and your cameras ... you won’t come back ... Just so long as you understand that.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - NIGHT

The ENGINEERS shovel more COAL into the FURNACE ... The relentless rhythm of the SHIPS PISTON’S PUMPING UP and DOWN continues ...

INT. PRESTON’S CABIN - NIGHT

PRESTON LYING AWAKE FREAKING OUT intercut with close ups of THE MAP WITH THE WORDS ‘FOG’.

WIDE ON: THE STERN of the VENTURE cuts through the swell then AERIAL up over the top of the boat.

INT. VENTURE HOLD - NIGHT

It is late at night. JACK sits on his make shift bed, his typewriter balanced on his lap ... intent on what he is writing.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - DUSK

ANGLE ON: ANN DANCING with JIMMY, much to the AMUSEMENT of GATHERED CREW ... CHOY is singing *Marie's Wedding* accompanied by some SAILORS playing various MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

CLOSE ON: JACK watching her ...

INT. VENTURE HOLD - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK continues typing.

EXT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: DENHAM scanning the HORIZON with BINOCULARS, ENGLEHORN comes out of the WHEELHOUSE ... some charts in his HAND ...

INT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

HAYES is manning the WHEEL. ENGLEHORN is staring at the CHARTS, a CIGARETTE in his hand. There is a PALPABLE sense of tension in the AIR.

HAYES
(tense)
How long do you expect us to stay out here?

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN puts his cigarette out, ignoring HAYES.

INT. ANN'S CABIN - NIGHT

ANN is pacing the cabin. She is wearing a SHAWL over pyjamas. She smiles as she turns pages of a loose leaf manuscript. ANN looks up at JACK.

ANN
(surprised)
You're writing a stage comedy?

JACK
I'm writing it for you.

ANN looks at him, taken aback.

ANN
Why would you do that?

JACK
Why would I write a play for you?

ANN
Yes.

JACK
Isn’t it obvious?

ANN
Not to me.

JACK
Well, it’s in the sub-text.

ANN
I guess I must’ve missed it.

JACK
It’s not about words ...

ANN looks at him uncertainly ... as JACK moves towards her ...

He takes her in his arms and kisses her.

CUT TO:

INT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: THE RADIO OPERATOR receiving MESSAGE.

CUT TO:

INT. ANN’S CABIN - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: JACK and ANN still KISSING.

CUT TO:

INT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: The RADIO OPERATOR hands a piece of paper to ENGLEHORN.

RADIO OPERATOR
Message for you, Captain.

EXT. VENTURE/OCEAN - NIGHT

AERIAL: The VENTURE cuts a wide arc through the sea as the SHIP slowly turns ...

EXT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: DENHAM, RUNNING up the STAIRS to the WHEELHOUSE.

DENHAM
(calling)
What’s going on?

INT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

HAYES manning the WHEEL, looks at DENHAM briefly ...

DENHAM
Hayes! Why are we turning around?

CLOSE ON: ENGLEHORN enters the CABIN ...

DENHAM (cont'd)
(blustering)
Englehorn, you can't just ...

ENGLEHORN
(curt)
Outside!

EXT. WHEELHOUSE, VENTURE DECK - NIGHT

ENGLEHORN
There's a warrant out for your arrest. Did you know that? I've been ordered to divert to Rangoon.

DENHAM
Another week - I haven't got a film yet. Please - I have risked everything I have on this!

ENGLEHORN
No, Denham - you risked everything *I* have.

DENHAM
What do you want? Tell me what you want? I'll give you anything.

ENGLEHORN regards DENHAM with cool detachment ...

ENGLEHORN
I want you off my ship.

ENGLEHORN heads back to the DOOR of the WHEELHOUSE.

ENGLEHORN (cont'd)
Set a course for Rangoon, Mr Hayes.

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VENTURE as it ploughs through the SWELL.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - NIGHT

DENHAM is leaning over the railing.

DENHAM
I’m finished. It’s over for me, Jack.

JACK
How did you think this would end, Carl?

INT. WHEELHOUSE, VENTURE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: HAYES at the WHEEL, looking down at the SHIP’S COMPASS ... it is swinging wildly to and fro.

HAYES
(calling)
Captain ...

CLOSE ON: ENGLEHORN looks at the compass with CONCERN. He takes the wheel from HAYES.

ENGLEHORN
Check our position. Use the stars.

ANGLE ON: HAYES steps outside the WHEELHOUSE, carrying a SEXTANT. ... he looks up at the SKY and his face hardens with concern.

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN looks across as HAYES appears at the WHEELHOUSE DOOR.

HAYES
(ominous)
There are no stars, Captain.

CUT TO:

EXT. VENTURE DECK - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: The MAP as it SLOWLY rotates in JACK’S HANDS.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM leaning on the RAILING staring absently out to SEA. Behind him JACK is looking at the MAP in his HANDS.

JACK
What is that?

DENHAM
(distracted)
What?

CLOSE ON: JACK’S EYE is caught by something on the PAPER. He shifts the MAP around, turning it upside down.

JACK
That.

JACK walks over to the railing and hands the MAP to DENHAM.

DENHAM
I don’t know ... what is it, a coffee stain?

DENHAM looks hard at the map, suddenly a look of intrigue dawning on his face.

SLOW PUSH IN on a STRANGE SMUDGE-LIKE MARKING ...

CLOSE ON: DENHAM is CAPTIVATED ...

CLOSE ON: DENHAM slowly looks up from the MAP, a look of HOPE kindles in his EYES.

CLOSE ON: the STRANGE SMUDGE-LIKE MARKING. An IMAGE begins to become clear - a GORILLA-LIKE FACE.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: the sudden blast of the SHIP’S FOG HORN.

DENHAM’s eyes shift upwards ...

AT THAT MOMENT a GUST of WIND plucks the MAP from DENHAM’S HAND and blows it overboard ... whirling it out to SEA ...

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: The MAP FLOATING on the INKY WATER as the VENTURE steams away ...

... into a HUGE BANK of FOG that seems to melt out of the DARKNESS!

Another BLAST from the FOG HORN echoes across the silent ocean.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - NIGHT

PRESTON moves along the DECK ... Staring uneasily at the FOG.

VARIOUS ANGLES: Even the seasoned crew look unnerved.

ANGLE ON: JIMMY up in the CROW’S NEST ... he is reading *HEART OF DARKNESS* by torchlight.

EXT. OCEAN - FOGGY NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VENTURE sails into THICKENING FOG.

INT. WHEELHOUSE - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN at the WHEEL ... he barks at the HELMSMAN.

ENGLEHORN
Station the for’head lookout, and get me the depth by lead-line!

HELMSMAN
Aye, Captain.

The HELMSMAN hurries away.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - FOGGY NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VENTURE steams through the FOG BANK ...

ANGLE ON: A CREWMAN throws a LEAD-LINE over the side. CONCERNED CREWMEN hurry to their stations.

CREWMAN
(calling)
Thirty fathoms ... no bottom!

INT. WHEELHOUSE - FOGGY NIGHT

HAYES is tense. ENGLEHORN remains focussed, his eyes fixed ahead.

ENGLEHORN
Reduce speed, steerage way only.

HAYES swings the TELEGRAPH LEVERS.

HAYES
Dead slow ahead, both.
(beat)
You should stop the ship.

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN spins the WHEEL.

ENGLEHORN
15 degrees Port.
(beat)
We’re getting out of here, Mr. Hayes ... we’ll find clear conditions.

CREWMAN (O.S.)
(calling)
We have seabed!

CLOSE ON: HAYES rushes out of the WHEELHOUSE.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: the CREWMAN with the LEAD LINE shouts up at HAYES.

CREWMAN
(alarmed)
Twenty-five fathoms!

INT. WHEELHOUSE - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: HAYES rushes to the WHEELHOUSE DOOR.

HAYES
We’re shallowing!

ENGLEHORN looks with despair at the THICKENING FOG ahead. He starts spinning the WHEEL.

ENGLEHORN
20 degrees starboard!

HAYES
(urgent)
Captain, you don’t know where the hell you’re going!

ENGLEHORN glares at HAYES.

ENGLEHORN
Get me another reading!

HAYES leaves ...

HAYES
(yelling)
Another reading!

EXT. VENTURE DECK - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK looks alarmed as CREWMEN hurry past.

DENHAM walks away from him, towards the front of the SHIP.

CREWMAN
Twenty-two fathoms!

INT. WHEELHOUSE - FOGGY NIGHT

ENGLEHORN peers uneasily out at the FOG ...

ENGLEHORN
Douse the lights!

HELMSMAN
Aye, aye Captain ...

EXT. CROWSNEST - FOGGY NIGHT

AERIAL: THE VENTURE sails through FOG.

CREWMAN
(calling)
Ten fathoms!

ANGLE ON: JIMMY looking around ... confused.

CLOSE ON: JIMMY’S eyes SUDDENLY WIDEN in DISBELIEF ... he leaps to his feet, unable to summon the power of speech!

ANGLE ON: A HUGE ROCK FACE looms out of the FOG straight AHEAD!

JIMMY
(yelling)
Wall! There’s a wall ahead!!!

EXT. VENTURE - FOGGY NIGHT

ENGLEHORN ... a look of DISBELIEF on his FACE.

EXT. VENTURE - FOGGY NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VENTURE sails directly towards a HUGE WALL which rises up 200 feet into the sky! The SHIP is DWARFED by the monstrous structure.

INT. WHEELHOUSE - FOGGY NIGHT

ENGLEHORN stares at the LOOMING WALL, unable to believe his eyes ... he starts SPINNING the WHEEL hard to STARBOARD!

ENGLEHORN
Stop engines!

ANGLE ON: HAYES slams the TELEGRAPH to “STOP”

EXT. VENTURE DECK - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: DENHAM is drawn to the FORWARD RAILING of the SHIP, looking up at the VAST WALL of ROCK towering over them in AWE.

EXT. VENTURE - FOGGY NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VENTURE SLOWS, but its weight is carrying it forward ...

EXT. CROWSNEST - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: A TERRIFIED JIMMY braces himself for impact.

INT. WHEELHOUSE - FOGGY NIGHT

ENGLEHORN searches desperately through the thick FOG.

EXT. CROWSNEST - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JIMMY, a look of TERROR on his FACE.

EXT. VENTURE- FOGGY NIGHT

CRUNCH! The BOW of the SHIP crumples in to the WALL!

EXT. VENTURE DECKS - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGEL ON: ANN rushes out of a door, on to the DECK, alarmed at the PANIC on the SHIP.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM looks in utter AWE at the WALL.

INT. VENTURE WHEELHOUSE - FOGGY NIGHT

CLOSE ON: ENGLEHORN yells at HAYES.

ENGLEHORN
Give me some power! Half astern, both!

HAYES
Half astern, both, Captain!

EXT. VENTURE DECKS - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK looks with horror as a JAGGED ROCK looms out of the FOG off the starboard bow.

JACK
Rocks!

EXT. CROWSNEST - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JIMMY spinning around as he sees ROCKS surrounding the SHIP.

JIMMY
(yelling)
Rocks to starboard ... to port ...
rocks everywhere!

INT. VENTURE WHEELHOUSE - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN lets go of the WHEEL rushing towards the WHEELHOUSE DOOR.

ENGLEHORN
Take the wheel, Hayes!

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN rushes on to the DECK and looks with HORROR as he realises his SHIP is trapped amid a LABYRINTH of ROCKS.

EXT. OCEAN - FOGGY NIGHT

The VENTURE lolls WITHOUT POWER in the heavy swell.

The HEAVY THROB of the ENGINES regain strength ... the reverse propellers pull the ship away, but still without adequate control.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ANN hurries up the STAIRS ... she clutches the RAILING for support and reels off balance, literally FALLING into JACK’S ARMS as the side of the VENTURE CRUNCHES against rock.

EXT. VENTURE - FOGGY NIGHT

The IMPACT sends the VENTURE into a SLOW SPIN. As the SHIP sinks in the trough of a WAVE, MORE ROCKS emerge from the WATER around it.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - FOGGY NIGHT

JACK looks down at ANN - he still has hold of her.

INT. WHEELHOUSE - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN staggers into the WHEELHOUSE, slamming the TELEGRAPH LEVER forward.

ENGLEHORN
Full ahead!

ENGLEHORN takes the WHEEL from HAYES.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - FOGGY NIGHT

HAYES runs OUTSIDE

HAYES
Rocks to port, Captain!

EXT. OCEAN - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: The VENTURE rides the SWELL towards CAMERA.

SUDDENLY!

A SICKENING GROAN OF METAL ... as the VENTURE RUNS AGROUND on HIDDEN ROCKS! HAYES looks in HORROR as he comes within inches of the rock outcrop.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: DENHAM watches as a HUGE STONE FACE - part of the ROCK OUTCROP they have grounded on - slides to a halt just off the VENTURE’S BOW. Weathered ... eroded away ... carved by the hand of some ANCIENT PEOPLE.

ANGLE ON: A breathless JIMMY scuttles backwards as the CROWSNEST settles against the ROCK.

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN shuts the engines down as his ship GRINDS sickeningly against the rock ...

... STUCK FAST.

PANDEMONIUM ON DECK!

ANGLE ON: HAYES, unable to believe his eyes as he STARES up at the LOOMING ROCK.

DENHAM stares at the EERIE SILHOUETTE of an ISLAND, visible through the thinning FOG. JAGGED PEAKS rise from a ROCKY SHORELINE. CRUMBLING RUINS cling to BARREN CLIFFS.

ANN steps closer, a LOOK of total DISBELIEF on her FACE.

INT. VENTURE ENGINE ROOM - FOGGY DAWN

CLOSE ON: JETS of WATER are squirting into the ENGINE ROOM, through cracks between RIVETED PLATES.

HAYES supervises STOKERS frantically opening valves on the PUMPS. OLD MATTRESSES are being shoved up against the LEAKS.

ENGLEHORN arrives, looking GRIM.

ENGLEHORN
Hayes!

HAYES
She’s taken a pounding ...

ENGLEHORN
What about the prop?

HAYES
Shaft’s not bent, far as we can tell,
but she’s stuck hard against the rock -

A LOUD GROAN as the SHIP shifts against the ROCKS.

At that moment JIMMY comes bursting into the ENGINE ROOM.

JIMMY
Captain! You’d better come up quick!

EXT. VENTURE DECK / OFFSHORE SKULL ISLAND - FOGGY DAWN

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN, HAYES and JIMMY emerge onto the DECK as the MILKY LIGHT of DAWN washes over the SHIP.

CLOSE ON: HERB holds the CAMERA as DENHAM cranks the HANDLE.

POV: A WHALER - a small lifeboat - is being ROWED away from the VENTURE towards the SHORE of the ISLAND. DENHAM, JACK and ANN, HERB, MIKE, BRUCE and FOUR SAILORS are packed into the tiny boat.

HAYES
You want me to bring them back?

ENGLEHORN
I don’t give a damn about Carl Denham ... I want this ship fixed and ready to float on the next high tide. We’re leaving Mr. Hayes.

EXT. SKULL ISLAND COAST - DAY

WIDE ON: The WHALER rows towards the ISLAND passing great STONE RUINS jutting out of the WATER. The HUGE WALL rises out of the WAVES and disappears INLAND.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM is balanced at the front of the BOAT, filming as the SAILORS row ashore ...

DENHAM
(quietly)
Can you believe this, Jack? ... Skull Island! We got our picture!

ANGLE ON: JACK as he STARES up at the RUINS ...

CLOSE ON: ANN, as if COMPELLED, turns and looks over the side of the BOAT, into the SEA ... her breathe catches!

ANN’S POV: Beneath the WATER the HIDEOUSLY, DISTORTED FACE of a FALLEN STATUE gapes up at her ...

ANGLE ON: ANN sitting huddled to one side of the BOAT ... drawing her RAIN-SLICKER closer around her ... ANN’S FINGERS edge across the seat and curl over JACK’S HAND ...

WIND WHISTLES through the GAPING HOLES in the EDIFICE ... a CREEPY MOANING SOUND that mixes with the DEEP BOOM of the CRASHING WAVES

EXT. SKULL ISLAND SHORE - DAY

ANGLE ON: The WHALER runs onto a tiny, stony BEACH. SHEER CLIFFS rise straight up from the SHORE.

DENHAM, JACK, ANN, BRUCE, HERB, MIKE, PRESTON and TWO SAILORS clamber out.

INT. ANCIENT STAIRCASE - DAY

WIDE ON: DENHAM leads HERB, PRESTON, JACK, ANN, BRUCE, MIKE and the TWO SAILORS up a DARK, VAULTED TUNNEL. They look in silence at the primitive signs of civilisation.

ANGLE ON: ANN looks up the STAIRCASE nervously ... taking in the sight of the HUMAN SKULLS lining the walls.

EXT. VENTURE - DAY

JIMMY looks up, hollow-eyed ... in his hand is the copy of “HEART OF DARKNESS”. HAYES stands nearby.

ANGLE ON: JIMMY closing the BOOK, an ashen expression on his FACE.

JIMMY
Why does Marlow keep going up the river, why doesn’t he turn back?

HAYES
(shrugs)
There’s a part of him that wants to, Jimmy. A part, deep inside himself that sounds a warning, but there’s another part, that needs to know ... that needs to defeat the thing which makes him afraid.

CLOSE ON: HAYES pauses, filled with a sudden sense of DREAD. He reluctantly turns, his eyes drawn to the creepy CARVED HEAD towering above the SHIP.

HAYES v/o
“We could not understand, because we were too far ... and could not remember, because we were travelling in the night of First Ages ...

CLOSE ON: DENHAM obsessed ... cranking the handle of his CAMERA.

HAYES V/O (cont’d)
... of those Ages that are gone, leaving hardly a sign and no memories ...

INT. BURIAL CHAMBER - DAY

DENHAM leads the GROUP across a RICKETY BAMBOO BRIDGE, spanning a section of BROKEN PATH. They pass BROKEN TOMBS, burial niches containing glimpses of MUMMIES.

AHEAD ... DAYLIGHT streams in as they near the end of the STAIRCASE. They make their way over large stone blocks, caved in from above ... QUIET, TENSE.

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE/WALL - DAY

THUNDER RUMBLES overhead as DENHAM, JACK, ANN, HERB, BRUCE, PRESTON, MIKE and 2 SAILORS clamber out of the RUINED TUNNEL MOUTH.

DENHAM stays low, and hurries to a VANTAGE POINT. The OTHERS FOLLOW ...

HAYES V/O
We are accustomed to look upon the shackled form of a conquered monster, but there, there you could look at a thing monstrous and free.”

CRANE UP: to reveal a PLATEAU below them, covered with the RUINS of an ANCIENT BURIAL GROUND ... stone MAUSOLEUMS and TOMBS, smashed open and destroyed.

EXT. VENTURE - DAY

ANGLE ON: JIMMY closes the BOOK.

JIMMY
(quiet)
It’s not an adventure story - is it, Mr. Hayes.

HAYES
(quiet)
No, Jimmy, it’s not.

HAYES’ EYES drift back to the STATUE. JIMMY follows his GAZE.

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE/WALL - DAY

ANGLE ON: DENHAM as he leads the group into the village.

SPREAD among the RUINS is a VILLAGE - a crude shanty town, created by a more recent and far less sophisticated culture ... ramshackle GRASS and BAMBOO HUTS.

ANGLE ON: PRESTON looking around, UNNERVED ...

PRESTON
It’s deserted ...

ANGLE ON: DENHAM cranking the CAMERA as he rolls film on the VILLAGE.

DENHAM
Of course it’s deserted. Use your eyes, Preston. The place is a ruin! Nobody’s lived here for hundreds of years.

At the moment they hear the sound of the SOBBING of a HUMAN CHILD ...

ANGLES ON: ANN, PRESTON, JACK, DENHAM, HERB ... not knowing if they heard what they just heard ...

ROW UPON ROW of sharpened BAMBOO SPIKES line the top of the WALL.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM ... His eyes suddenly widen in disbelief.

ANGLE ON: A SMALL CHILD standing on the DUSTY PATH ahead of them. She stares up at them, with weird FERAL EYES.

THE CHILD slowly raises an arm towards the watching GROUP ... in a pointing gesture. A suspended moment ... DENHAM steps forward.

ANN
(whispering)
Mr Denham ... I think we should go back.

DENHAM
I will handle this.

DENHAM pulls a NESTLE BAR from his pocket and walks up to the CHILD. DENHAM waves the chocolate around.

DENHAM (cont'd)
Look chocolate ... you like chocolate?

The CHILD'S EYES drill into DENHAM. RAIN STARTS FALLING.

DENHAM (cont'd)
Good to eat! Take it ... take it!

The CHILD steps back. DENHAM grabs the CHILD by the wrist and attempts to press the chocolate bar into her HAND. The CHILD struggles and CRIES OUT!

BRUCE.
For Godsake, Denham, leave the native alone.

JACK
She doesn't want the chocolate!

ANGLE ON: VILLAGERS begin to melt out of the shadows, OLD PEOPLE, YOUNG PEOPLE, WOMEN stare HOLLOW-EYED at DENHAM as he wrestles with the CHILD.

The CHILD sinks her TEETH into DENHAM'S WRIST. He yells, releasing his grip. The CHILD runs off ... in to the arms of an OLD WOMAN ...

The GROUP starts to nervously walk forward, DENHAM gestures impatiently.

DENHAM
It’s alright - it’s just a bunch of women and old folks ... they’re harmless.

ANGLE ON: ANN looks STARTLED as MIKE suddenly LURCHES past her.

ANN
Mike?

MIKE turns, gasping, staring at her helplessly! And then FALLS face forward, a JAGGED SPEAR stuck in his BACK!

ANN steps back in HORROR and SCREAMS!

A RUMBLING, BESTIAL ROAR fills the VILLAGE as if in answer to ANN’S CRY ... LOUD and CLOSE ... for a brief moment everyone freezes ...

FAST ACTION: NATIVE MEN emerge as if from NOWHERE ... before anyone can react, they are roughly SHOVED and PULLED into the MIDST of the FURIOUS NATIVE MOB.

In the SHADOWS the agitated WOMEN of the VILLAGE start rocking and wailing in unison.

IMAGES: STRANGE FACES, smeared with MUD ... SCREECHING MOUTHS. BRUCE is HELD BACK by SEVERAL NATIVES as he struggles. JACK pulls ANN close to him, trying to protect her. ANN is wrenched from him ...

She struggles against her captors ...

ANGLE ON: A OLD-WOMAN moves through the midst of the VILLAGERS ... her gaze fixed on ANN, muttering curses, eyes burning with a dark fury ...

DENHAM is YELLING at the NATIVES ... he is SHOVED to the GROUND.

The NATIVES SHRIEK. One of the SAILORS is DRAGGED forward, his HEAD pushed against a FLAT STONE SLAB, and CLUBBED TO DEATH.

ANGLE ON: In the midst of the CONFUSION, JACK sees the OLD SHA-WOMAN screaming at ANN. She starts chanting with rising HYSTERICS ...

SHA-WOMAN
(chanting)
Larri yu sano korê ... Kweh yonê kah’weh ad-larr ... torê Kông.

CLOSE ON: JACK struggles, fists flying - he is clubbed and DROPS like a stone.

ANN SCREAMS ... the BEAST ROARS in the DISTANCE!

DENHAM punches a NATIVE ... they haul him forward and thrust his HEAD onto the BLOOD SPLATTERED STONE ... NATIVE CLUBS rise into the air ...

... a GUNSHOT!

The NATIVES hesitate, as if STUNNED ... then SCATTER.

ENGLEHORN, HAYES and an ARMED GROUP of SAILORS race into the VILLAGE!

ENGLEHORN roughly hauls DENHAM to his feet.

ENGLEHORN
Seen enough?

EXT. VENTURE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: As EACH WAVE hits the VENTURE, it GROANS and SCRAPES against the ROCKS - SHIFTING SLIGHTLY.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN, desperate ... yelling at his CREW, above the HOWLING WIND.

ENGLEHORN
(yelling)
Lighten the ship! Anything that’s not bolted down goes overboard!

ANGLES ON: As WAVES crash against the STRANDED SHIP, LUMPY, JIMMY, CHOY and the other SAILORS throw TABLES, CHESTS ... KITCHEN EQUIPMENT into the SEA.

INT. DENHAM’S CABIN - NIGHT

DENHAM is swigging from a HIP FLASK. HERB and PRESTON are gathered gloomily around a TABLE, while DENHAM strides around the ROOM, swigging and talking in a animated fashion. The STORM BATTERS and CRASHES outside.

DENHAM
We got away. We gotta be grateful for that gentlemen.

PRESTON
What about Mike? He didn’t get away - he’s still there!

DENHAM
(sharply)
Mike died doing what he believed in! He didn’t die for nothing. And I’ll tell you something else - I’m going to finish this film - for Mike.

DENHAM(cont'd)
I’m going to finish it and donate the proceeds to his wife and kids - because that man is a hero and he deserves nothing less!

HERB
Hear! Hear!

INT. ANN’S CABIN - NIGHT

ANN alone in her CABIN, is overwhelmed by a terrible SENSE of FOREBODING ...

SUDDENLY! A WAVE crashes against her WINDOW! SHE SPINS AROUND IN FRIGHT.

As she turns slowly she catches sight of her terrified reflection in the MIRROR.

EXT. ROCKS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: NATIVES are moving towards the VENTURE ...

CUT TO:

INT. ANN’S CABIN - NIGHT

A growing sense of UNEASE fills ANN with DREAD.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROCKS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: using LONG BAMBOO POLES, A NATIVE silently VAULTS from ROCK to ROCK over the STORMY SEAS ... towards the GROUNDED SHIP

EXT. VENTURE DECK - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: A SKULL ISLANDER LANDS on the BACK DECK of the VENTURE UNSEEN! He CROUCHES in the shadows ...

INT. MESS ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: JACK sprawled on a BENCH SEAT in the MESS ... a LOUD METALLIC CREAK wakes him up. He rolls over, tries to focus ... he touches his hand to the back of his HEAD ... when he withdraws his hand ... his fingers are covered in BLOOD.

SUDDENLY LUMPY and a SAILOR pick the TABLE up from under him and carry it outside.

CUT TO:

INT. ANN’S CABIN - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: ANN, a sense of foreboding...

EXT. VENTURE DECK - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK staggers on to the BACK DECK, clutching a railing to steady himself. He suddenly discovers a NATIVE NECKLACE on the DECK ...

... JACK stares at the NECKLACE, decorated with a MONKEY SKULL, a look of HORRIFIED REALIZATION growing. JIMMY is racing past, JACK grabs him:

JACK
Where’s Ann?

JIMMY
She went to her cabin.

INT. ANN’S CABIN - NIGHT

ANN alone in her CABIN. She looks down and notices her HANDS are TREMBLING.

SUDDENLY! Her CABIN door starts to rattle. She swings around in FRIGHT, to see cabin’s DOOR HANDLE - which is turning ...

ANGLE ON: ANN’S FACE as her CABIN DOOR opens ...

INT. VENTURE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK desperately pushes past CREW in the CROWDED, panicked CORRIDOR, trying to get to ANN’S CABIN ...

EXT. VENTURE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VENTURE at the MERCY of the RAGING SEAS as it moves even closer to the REEF.

INT. VENTURE CORRIDORS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK loses his footing as the SHIP lurches VIOLENTLY. He lands on the floor ...

CLOSE ON: JACK looks down the length of the CORRIDOR ... the DOOR of ANN’S CABIN is swinging open.

INT. ANN’S CABIN - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: The SHIP ROLLS as JACK staggers into ANN’S CABIN ... SHOCKED to find it EMPTY with clear signs of a STRUGGLE.

INT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: HAYES desperately trying to control the WHEEL.

EXT. VENTURE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VENTURE floats free!

A LOUD CHEER goes up from the CREW!

INT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN shouts the command ...

ENGLEHORN
Wheel amidship ... Full ahead, both engines.

EXT. VENTURE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VENTURE plows between the JAGGED ROCKS off toward OPEN SEA ...

INT. ANN’S CABIN

JACK bursts into the CABIN. CLOTHES are SCATTERED EVERYWHERE. clearly a sign of a struggle.

JACK
Ann!

INT. VENTURE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK races down the CORRIDOR finding a DEAD CREW MEMBER lying below the STAIRS!

EXT. SKULL ISLAND SHORE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ANN in the NATIVE’S GRIP ... they are being PULLED through the STORMY SEAS onto the SHORE, by the other NATIVES HAULING on a ROPE. ANN is HALF DROWNED.

The VENTURE is barely visible moving through the SEA SPRAY.

EXT. VENTURE DECKS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN comes out of the WHEELHOUSE - JACK is on the LOWER DECK.

JACK (O.S.)
Stop! Stop! Turn back, we have to turn back!

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN turns - he can hear the alarm in JACK’s VOICE.

JACK (cont’d)
They’ve taken Ann!

CLOSE ON: ENGLEHORN, he glances back at the ISLAND as the VENTURE ploughs towards the open sea.

ANGLE ON: An ORANGE GLOW of FIRELIGHT is VISIBLE, emanating from the NATIVE VILLAGE.

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE/WALL - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ANN being DRAGGED through a FRENZY OF FEARFUL Skull Island NATIVES. GLIMPSES of WAILING ... COWERING ... CHANTING.

FLAMES BLAZE along the TOP OF THE WALL.

CLOSE ON: A withered old WOMAN, EYES RED in some DRUG induced TRANCE, speaks in TONGUES. ANN is forced to her knees.

The OLD WOMAN splashes some foul LIQUID into her face ... younger WOMEN tie BRACELETS on her wrists.

EXT. VENTURE DECKS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: COVERS are pulled off lifeboats as the SHIP’S CREW gather EQUIPMENT.

CLOSE ON: HAYES yelling commands:

HAYES
All hands going ashore ...

CRASH CUT TO:

INT. ENGLEHORN’S CABIN - NIGHT

HAYES V/O
... report to stations! Jump to it!

ENGLEHORN LIFTS UP THE WINDOW SEAT ... revealing a ROW of TOMMY GUNS hidden there.

ANGLES ON: GUNS are handed out.

EXT. VENTURE DECKS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: EQUIPMENT and RIFLES are THROWN IN. The ENTIRE SHIP’S CREW is MOBILIZING.

HAYES (V.O.)
What the hell are you doing? You want that boat to sink? Stow those rifles midships - come on, hurry it up!

ANGLE ON: DENHAM surreptitiously supervises HERB and PRESTON as they load CAMERA EQUIPMENT on board one of the BOATS ...

ANGLE ON: JACK loading a BOX of AMMUNITION on to the other BOAT ... he looks tensely at the FIRES burning on the ISLAND.

ANGLE ON: The TWO BOATS are swung out and LOWERED.

HAYES (cont'd)
Lower away!

EXT. VENTURE - NIGHT

The TWO BOATS ROW AWAY from the SHIP, packed with SHIP'S CREW ... in one BOAT are DENHAM, PRESTON and HERB - clutching CAMERA EQUIPMENT.

ANGLE ON: JACK in the OTHER BOAT, looking GRIM and DETERMINED.

EXT. SKULL ISLAND COAST - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: the TINY BOATS are tossed in the RAGING SEAS. SAILORS try to STEER them towards the SHORE, as they bounce off ROCKS and STATUES.

EXT. TOP OF WALL - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: FLAMING TORCHES ignite POOLS of OIL along the length of the TOP of the WALL.

ANGLES ON: ANN'S WRIST'S are TIED outstretched to BAMBOO POSTS. She is on the SUMMIT of the WALL, lit by the flickering FLAMES ... looking out onto DARK TREE TOPS.

FLAMES DANCE ... DRUMS BEAT in a RITUALISTIC FRENZY.

ANGLE ON: SKULL ISLANDERS knock away WOODEN PLUGS, releasing the FLAMING OIL to pour down rough CHANNELS hewn into the STONE of the WALL ... it runs and falls down CHUTES into POOLS carved into the GROTTO WALLS.

WIDE ON: The CLIFF WALLS light up as FLAMES within LARGE CARVED CHAMBERS create huge backlit PAGAN FACES.

FIRELIGHT dances across the nightmarish JUNGLE ... DISTANT TREES start to TREMBLE, their canopies swaying as if PUSHED by an UNSEEN FORCE.

CLOSE ON: ANN ... looking on with HORROR at the MOVEMENT in the JUNGLE below her. She struggles against the ROPES, to no avail.

CLOSE ON: The OLD WOMAN, eyes rolled up in her head.

CLOSE ON: A NECKLACE is placed over ANN'S head.

ANGLE ON: A SHAMAN starts BEATING out a RHYTHM on a LOG DRUM ... SKULL ISLANDERS fall to their KNEES ... a MOANING WAIL rises ... the DRUMMING builds to a FRENZIED CLIMAX.

WIDE ON: On the OTHER SIDE, the WALL falls away vertically into a ROCKY GROTTO, leading into the DENSE TANGLED JUNGLE of SKULL ISLAND.

SUDDENLY ANN feels herself DRAGGED FORWARD ... the POSTS she is tied to are MOVING, pulling her TOWARDS the EDGE of the WALL! ANN digs her heels and tries to PULL AGAINST it, but is unable to stop herself being HAULED OFF THE WALL ...

... into thin air!

ANGLE ON: SKULL ISLANDERS lowering the BAMBOO ALTAR STRUCTURE DOWN, slowly releasing the flaxen ROPE.

ANN is dangling from the POSTS by her WRISTS, as the HINGED FRAMEWORK swings her out over the CHASM, LOWERING her towards a ROCK PROMONTORY on the EDGE of the FOREST.

ANGLE ON: ANN is LOWERED onto the ROCK PROMONTORY, which resembles an ALTAR ... ANN struggles to free herself, but she is tied fast to the posts, a TINY FIGURE illuminated by enormous GLOWING CARVINGS ... the WALL towering up behind her.

ANGLES ON: ANN squirms ... as the FOREST BELOW HER BROILS and SEETHES! TREES are violently SWAYING ... above the crescendo of the NATIVE FRENZY, ANGRY BESTIAL ROARS can be heard.

SKULL ISLANDERS line the TOP of the WALL, their WAILING and CHANTING interrupted by a LOUD SPLINTERING SOUND.

EXT. SKULL ISLAND SHORE - NIGHT

The SHIP’S BOATS pull up at the foot of the great STAIRCASE. JACK leaps out of the BOAT and races up the stairs.

EXT. WALL GROTTO - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: ANN lifts her head ... something VERY BIG is moving towards HER.

ANN catches a BRIEF GLIMPSE of a HUGE DARK SHAPE propelling itself THROUGH the JUNGLE ... the OILY SMOKE from the FIRES hangs in the air, OBSCURING HER VISION ... she can now only hear the CREATURE’S MOVEMENTS and BREATH as it draws ever closer.

ANN cowers back, pulling at her bonds.

A MASSIVE SHAPE moves through the air ... The ground SHAKES with a sudden force of IMPACT!

ANGLE ON: ANN stands trembling, as the swirling smokey cloud slowly DISSIPATES ... a GIANT LEATHERY FOOT is visible.

CLOSE ON: ANN balanced on a knife-edge of TERROR.

A SUDDEN PUFF OF WIND INSTANTLY CLEARS THE VEILING SMOKE.

ANN slowly LOOKS UP, her face filled with DREAD.

The SKULL ISLANDERS reply in UNISON ... a piercing WAIL, from the TOP of the WALL.

ANN'S strength suddenly DRAINS from her legs, and SLUMPS between the POSTS.

Before her is ... KONG!

A 25 FOOT TALL MALE GORILLA! KONG stares at ANN for a beat, leaning forward on his KNUCKLES ... then prods her with his finger.

SUDDENLY ... GUNSHOTS!

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE/WALL - NIGHT

FRENZIED MOVEMENT: SAILORS, lead by ENGLEHORN, race into the VILLAGE firing WARNING SHOTS in the air ... SKULL ISLANDERS SCATTER in TERROR ...

EXT. WALL GROTTO - NIGHT

WIDE ON: KONG in front of ANN ... HE RISES to his full height and BEATS HIS CHEST!

KONG'S HUGE HAND snatches ANN and roughly PULLS her free of her bonds.

A DEAFENING ROAR!

ANN SCREAMS!

CLUTCHING her tightly, KONG carries ANN away from the ALTAR.

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE/WALL - NIGHT

FRENZIED MOVEMENT: SAILORS, lead by ENGLEHORN, race into the VILLAGE firing WARNING SHOTS in the air ... SKULL ISLANDERS SCATTER in TERROR ...

ANGLES ON: The SKULL ISLANDERS melt away into the darkness ... vanishing as fast as they appeared.

... from behind the WALL, the DISTANT CRY of ANN screaming for help, following by an EARTH SHUDDERING ROAR.

ENGLEHORN
(staring upwards)
What in God's name was that?

JACK
(sudden realisation)
Behind the wall!

ANGLE ON: JACK rushes to the BASE of the WALL and begins to climb ...

DENHAM hurries to the massive, heavily fortified gate.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM staring through the LATTICE WORK of sharpened bamboo ...

DENHAM'S POV: A fleeting glimpse of KONG disappearing into the depths of the jungle. In his HUGE FIST KONG clutches ANN!

EXT. TOP OF WALL - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK has reached the top of the WALL ... he races to the EDGE peering over it. Nothing ... only the primitive ALTAR, and beyond, DARK JUNGLE dissolving into BLACKNESS.

JACK'S POV: The EMPTY ROPES binding ANN'S WRISTS swing from the ALTAR POSTS.

JACK
(disbelief)
She's gone!

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE/WALL - NIGHT

JACK is hurrying down from the WALL.

JACK
She's gone!

CLOSE ON: DENHAM in SHOCK ... his mind racing, fuelled by FEAR. Gradually his breathing slows and another part of his brain kicks into gear.

JACK makes brief eye contact with DENHAM, who quickly looks away.

JACK (cont'd)
Carl? What is it?
(realizing)
You saw something ...

LATER ...

ANGLE ON: BOXES of AMMUNITION and GUNS have been brought up from the beach. Lids are prised open ... AMMO distributed.

DENHAM is surrounded by JACK, ENGLEHORN and the SAILORS.

ENGLEHORN
You can take Hayes and fifteen others. I'll put a guard on the gate until you return ... The rest of you, stay with the ship.

JACK grabs his PACK and WALKS away TOWARDS THE GATE, with LUMPY & JIMMY following.

HAYES
Not you, Jimmy.

JIMMY
Com'on Mr. Hayes, look at 'em. None of them knows a which way to point a gun.

HAYES takes the RIFLE out of JIMMY'S HANDS.

HAYES
Stay here.

JIMMY
Miss Darrow needs me!

HAYES
No!

CLOSE ON: JIMMY, crestfallen.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM by the CAMERA BOXES with HERB and PRESTON.

DENHAM
(quietly)
Bring the tripod - and all of the film stock.

HERB
You wanna go with the six inch lens?

DENHAM
The wide angle will do just fine.

CLOSE ON: PRESTON slings the FILM STOCK BAG over his SHOULDER.

ANGLE ON: JACK, PRESTON, HAYES, LUMPY, CHOY, BRUCE and 8 SAILORS as ENGLEHORN surveys the GROUP. DENHAM and HERB are HAULING CAMERA EQUIPMENT.

ENGLEHORN
You got guns, you got food, you got ammo. You got twenty-four hours.

BRUCE
Twenty-four hours?

ENGLEHORN
This time tomorrow we haul anchor.

CLOSE ON: JACK ... as he slings his GUN on his shoulder, turns and HEADS through the GATE.

EXT. SKULL ISLAND JUNGLE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VOLCANIC ROCKS form a JAGGED, TORTURED LANDSCAPE of DEEP CREVASSES and TOWERING CLIFFS. The vegetation is THICK, the JUNGLE DARK. ANCIENT GNARLED TREES twist out of the ground, thick LICHEN and long MOSSES hang from branches and TANGLED VINES. STEAM RISES from festering SWAMPS ...

HAYES is LEADING DENHAM, JACK, PRESTON, LUMPY, CHOY, BRUCE and EIGHT SAILORS. HERB is limping along with the heavy CAMERA on his shoulder.

The atmosphere is TENSE ... unseen creatures scurry in the darkness, fleeing from the approaching humans.

HAYES puts his hands up ... the GROUP stops ... a STRANGE, LOW MOAN echoes from the SURROUNDING JUNGLE ... The MEN stare into the darkness ... watchful, on edge ...

EXT. KILLING GROUND - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: ANN in KONG'S HAND, being tossed around like a rag doll as KONG RUNS through the FOREST.

ANGLE ON: KONG propels himself through the JUNGLE with EASE, barely disturbing the forest, moving with GRACE along a well used route.

CLOSE ON: ANN held fast in his GRIP. She is FLUNG wildly around as KONG BOUNDS across CHASMS, LEAPING over rivers.

ANN'S FEVERED POV: The JUNGLE SPINNING and BLURRING by. She tries to brace herself against KONG'S FINGERS, but the rigors of the journey knock her sideways like a RAG DOLL.

WIDE ON: SHAFTS of MOONLIGHT play on the faces of grotesque STATUES set into a MOSSY CLIFF.

ANGLE ON: ANN clutched tightly in KONG'S HAND. She is rigid with FEAR. KONG squats down ... he LOOKS CLOSELY at ANN.

CLOSE ON: KONG ... we see him clearly for the first time. A very old, brutish BULL GORILLA. Years of survival have left SCARS on his face. One EYE LID is mangled and his JAW is CROOKED ... leaving a huge yellowed INCISOR TOOTH jutting up.

KONG stares at ANN ... she dare not move; only her RAPID BREATHING belies her INNER TERROR.

ANGLE ON: ANN is suddenly swung UPSIDE DOWN and SHAKEN ... the ceremonial NECKLACE falls from ANN'S NECK.

CLOSE ON: ANN'S HORRIFIED FACE ... she sees HUMAN REMAINS amongst the NECKLACES! Bones ... skulls! A WHIMPERING SOUND escapes from the back of her throat.

SWIRLING UPSIDE DOWN POV: The NECKLACE lands on the ground - amid DOZENS of OTHER NECKLACES littering the clearing.

ANGLE ON: ANN is lifted UPWARDS ... KONG'S LIPS curl in a low, slow SNARL.

ANN looks at KONG, aghast, and in this moment her heightened sense of FEAR gives way to something more fundamental: SELF PRESERVATION!

KONG’S FINGERS start to OPEN - ANN seizes her chance! She suddenly PROPELS herself off his HAND! ANN DROPS 12 feet and lands heavily at KONG’S FEET. She rolls amongst grinning HUMAN SKULLS and LEG BONES ... staggers to her feet and RUNS!

KONG rises up with a ROAR, but ANN is already disappearing into the JUNGLE!

EXT. DENSE JUNGLE - NIGHT

ANGLES ON: ANN desperately powering through the DENSE UNDERGROWTH. She throws herself over huge FALLEN LOGS, through TANGLED VINES. She GLANCES BACK ...

... TREES are FALLING, KONG is smashing through the undergrowth after her!

ANGLE ON: With surprising AGILITY and GRACE, KONG sweeps down from above and SCOOPS ANN off the ROCK. She barely has time to CRY OUT before being CARRIED AWAY, as KONG disappears into the DEPTHS of the ISLAND.

EXT. TANGLED VINES - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: JACK ... hearing ANN’S DISTANT SCREAMS!

JACK
Ann!

ANGLE ON: JACK starts RUNNING towards the SOUND. DENHAM and the OTHERS follow ... JACK is barging through THICK TANGLED VEGETATION, which is growing between huge moss covered FALLEN COLUMNS.

KONG’S ENRAGED ROAR echos through the JUNGLE.

JACK (cont’d)
(yelling)
Ann!

EXT. TANGLED VINES - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: The GROUP pause at the sound of ANN’S TERRIFIED SCREAM.

CLOSE ON: JACK’S ashen face.

EXT. DENSE JUNGLE - NIGHT

KONG LEAPS ACROSS CHASMS as he CARRIES ANN through the JUNGLE.

EXT. KILLING GROUND - DAWN

ANGLE ON: JACK picks up ANN’S NECKLACE ... a LOCK of BLONDE HAIR still tangled within it’s STRANDS ...

WIDE ON: DAWN LIGHT brightens the SKY as the GROUP survey the KILLING GROUND.

LUMPY
Christ! It’s a bleeding bone yard!
(horrified realization)
They’ve been ripped limb from limb.

JACK
(calling)
Ann! Ann!

ANGLE ON: DENHAM casts an eye over the DEBRIS STREWN GROUND ... his gaze rising to a HUGE GASH in the FOREST ...

DENHAM POV: TREES have been RIPPED from the earth where KONG has SMASHED a path through the JUNGLE ...

ANGLE ON: HAYES notices a SAILOR with a WOOLLEN HAT pulled down over his head ... the SAILOR has turned away from the GRISLY REMAINS. HAYES bats the hat off the SAILOR’S HEAD ... it’s JIMMY.

JIMMY
Just keep walking, Mr. Hayes. Pretend you didn’t see me.

HAYES
Jesus, Jimmy!

HAYES snatches the GUN off him ...

JIMMY
(defiant)
Hey! I need that!

HAYES
(angry)
I’m not giving you a gun!

JIMMY
You were younger than me when they gave *you* one!

HAYES
I was in the army. I was trained - I had a drill sergeant!

CLOSE ON: JIMMY looks at HAYES.

JIMMY
(quietly)
I just wanna help bring her back.

HAYES’s expression softens. He hands the gun back to JIMMY.

HAYES
Don’t make me regret it.

EXT. ROUGH TERRAIN - DAY

ANGLE ON: The GROUP’S NERVES are FRAYED ... as they continue slogging through the difficult TERRAIN. HUGE INSECTS fly around them, AND THE GROUP try in vain to SWAT them away.

ANGLE ON: LUMPY shooting WILDLY at a HUGE BUG ...

HAYES
(growling)
Conserve your ammunition!

LUMPY GLARES at HAYES ... and SHOOTS one last time at a HUGE BUG ON A NEARBY TREE ...

EXT. RUINED VALLEY - DAY

ANGLE ON: SLIDING FEET ... down a VINE strewn slope.

PULL BACK to reveal ... the GROUP have emerged from the JUNGLE into a NARROW VALLEY, deep in the heart of SKULL ISLAND ... The VALLEY is less than 75 feet wide, flanked by sheer CLIFFS.

JACK looks up and down the VALLEY ... he wipes his brow .. the SUN is high, it is hot out of the SHADE.

ANGLE ON: LUMPY stumbling forward with a hacking SMOKER’S COUGH.

LUMPY
I’m knackered! I’ve gotta have a breather.

LUMPY flops down on the ground, and grabs a cigarette from behind his ear and lights up.

JACK watches as OTHER SAILORS follow suit.

JACK
Hey fellas - we don’t have time for this. We’ve lost too much ground already! Come on, - get up!

HAYES
(quiet)
They’re not about to quit on you. Cut them some slack.

JACK stares at HAYES and then sighs, resigned.

HAYES calls to the MEN ...

HAYES (cont’d)
Alright, you got five minutes! Everybody stay in sight!

ANGLE ON: DENHAM grabs the CAMERA from HERB. Nearby PRESTON sets up the TRIPOD.

DENHAM
(hushed)
Over here. I wanna get a wide shot of the valley.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM as he arrives at the top of the SLOPE, he turns at the sound of a STRANGE NOISE ...

PUSH IN: ON DENHAM ... a look of AMAZEMENT dawning on his FACE.

CLOSE ON: JACK kneels down and stares at an unmistakable indent in the sand: a GIANT FOOTPRINT!

LUMPY
Bloody Nora!

JACK looks up to see SAILORS gathering around.

JIMMY
Is that what took Miss Darrow?

LUMPY
(sagely)
There’s only one creature capable of leaving a footprint that size ...

ALL look up at LUMPY ...

LUMPY (cont’d)
The abominable snowman!

A ripple of FEAR spreads throughout the CROWD.

The RATTLED SAILORS mutter agreement. There is random chatter of turning back.

HAYES kneels down beside JACK ...

HAYES
(quiet)
It’s gotta be - what? Twenty - twenty-five feet?

JACK
(grimly)
Carl saw it. Let’s ask him.

HAYES looks over his SHOULDER ...

HAYES
Denham!
(no answer)
Where’d he go?

ANGLE ON: JACK walking up the VALLEY.

JACK
Carl!!!

WIDE ON: DENHAM, BRUCE and HERB arrive at the TOP of the VALLEY ... they stare transfixed at a HERD of grazing BRONTOSAURS.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM is cranking the CAMERA ...

DENHAM
(low)
Walk forward, Bruce.

BRUCE
What?!

ANGLE ON: a HERD of TWELVE BRONTOSAURS are slowly moving through a WIDE CLEARING ahead.

DENHAM
You’re the star of this picture! Get into character and head towards the animals.

ANGLE ON: BRUCE nervously SHUFFLES forward ...

BRUCE
What the hell kind of place is this?
(beat)
Are you sure about this, Denham???
Don’t we have a stand-in for this type of thing?

DENHAM
I need you in the shot, or people will say they’re fake.

BRUCE
Nobody’s gonna think these are fake!

SUDDEN flash of MOVEMENT! CARNOTAURS are circling the HERD.

ANGLE ON: the BRONTOSAUR HERD looking EDGY and RESTLESS!

DENHAM
You’re making them nervous! No sudden movement.

BRUCE
I’m not moving.

A LOW RUMBLING SOUND can now be heard ... the GROUND starts to SHAKE ...

PUSH IN: on BRUCE as he realizes what is about to HAPPEN!

BRUCE (cont’d)
(under his breath)
Mother of God ...

ANGLE ON: BRUCE suddenly turns and runs!

ANGLE ON: HERB is starting to get NERVOUS as DENHAM determinedly continues filming ...

WIDE ON: A sudden FALL of ROCKS ... Jack looks up!

ANGLE ON: The MEN look NERVOUS as the GROUND starts to TREMBLE beneath their feet!

JACK turns and sees: BRUCE running down the hill ...

JACK
What is it?! Where’s Carl?

BRUCE slows down, attempting to appear CALM.

BRUCE
He’s - he’s ... um ... well, he’s up there ... filming.

A LOUD ROAR!

BRUCE bolts like a STARTLED RABBIT!

SEVERAL nervous SAILORS jump up and start running.

ANGLE ON: JACK cautiously moves uphill towards the source of the LOUD RUMBLING SOUND.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM and HERB appear on the brow of the HILL. They are running flat out towards JACK!

Seconds later a HERD of BRONTOSAURUS stampede down the hill after DENHAM and HERB!

DENHAM
Run Jack!

JACK
Holy Christ!

HAYES
(yelling)
Go Jimmy - Run!

EVERYONE TURNS and FLEES!

ANGLE ON: JACK running ... he looks back and sees DENHAM trip and fall!

The STAMPEDING DINOSAURS storm towards DENHAM down the NARROW VALLEY!

CLOSE ON: DENHAM is frozen to the spot, staring at the CAMERA, which is lying directly in the rampaging DINOSAUR’S PATH.

JACK turns back ... he attempts to drag DENHAM to his FEET, as DENHAM struggles to grab hold of the CAMERA and TRIPOD.

JACK
Leave it!!!

DENHAM
No!!!

DENHAM and JACK scramble to their feet and start to RUN! DENHAM cradles the CAMERA and TRIPOD in his ARMS, as the BRONTO PACK bears down on them from behind!

Spectacular TRACKING SHOT: ... The PACK of 15 CARNOTAURS are CLOSING IN on the BRONTOSAURUS HERD! A CARNOTAUR leaps onto the back of a FLEEING BRONTOSAUR, causing it to falter and slide against the cliff. TWO MORE CARNOTAURS leap onto the ailing BRONTOSAUR as the rest of the pack stream past.

DENHAM, JACK and the OTHERS are running as fast as they can ... JACK glances over his shoulder - the WALL of THUNDERING BRONTOSAUR LEGS are about to ENGULF THEM!

ANGLE ON: JACK and DENHAM suddenly find themselves in a SEA of HUGE LEGS - like wildly pounding Redwood tree trunks! The CARNOTAURS are snapping and snarling at the LEGS ... they see the MEN! Their only hope of survival is to stay WITHIN THE STAMPEDE, out of reach of the MEATEATERS!

QUICK IMAGES: THE GROUP in the SEA of LEGS ... a SAILOR trips and is CRUSHED UNDERFOOT. A COUPLE OF SAILORS jump clear of the BRONTOSAURS - only to be set on by the CARNOTAURS. JACK ... DENHAM ... SAILORS ... everyone is running madly, dodging BRONTOSAURS, CARNOTAURS and trying not to fall!

A CARNOTAUR focuses on JACK ... it skillfully weaves IN BETWEEN and UNDER the BRONTOSAURS and emerges right behind JACK, it’s SNAPPING JAWS inches away from his head!

JACK suddenly SIDE-STEPS, and SHOULDER-BARGES the CARNOTAUR SIDEWAYS - under a BRONTOSAUR’S LEGS. The CARNOTAUR is instantly trampled!

BRUCE is managing to stay ahead of the stampede - possibly RUNNING FASTER than any human before him! A CARNOTAUR races out in front of the stampede and bears down on BRUCE with incredible speed! BRUCE desperately waves a TOMMY GUN at the CARNOTAUR ... TOWARDS THE STAMPEDE!

JACK sees it coming ...

JACK
(yelling)
No!!!!

BRUCE FIRES, missing the CARNOTAUR ...

... but he hits the LEAD BRONTOSAUR, following behind, in the chest. The BRONTOSAUR COLLAPSES AT TOP SPEED! It CARTWHEELS OVER, it’s huge NECK and TAIL thrashing out. The OTHER BRONTOSAURS PLOUGH INTO IT, tripping and rolling!

JACK and the SAILORS suddenly find themselves in the middle of an amazing FLESHY FREIGHT TRAIN PILE-UP! SAILORS are crushed as BRONTOSAURS come down on top of them! A CARNOTAUR is squashed when TWO BRONTOSAURS slam together.

JACK rolls against a rock as MOUNTAINS of BRONTOSAUR TUMBLE all around him.

DENHAM throws himself onto the ground, shielding the CAMERA.

In the space of seconds, the MIGHTY HERD OF BEHEMOTHS is reduced to a VAST PILE of DEAD or WOUNDED ANIMALS ... The CARNOTAURS immediately go to work, leaping onto BRONTOSAURS, ripping into fleshy stomachs.

JACK crawls past huge HEAVING BELLIES and TWITCHING LEGS ... he staggers out of the DINOSAUR PILE-UP ... he turns back at the SOUND OF LOUD HISSING - a CARNOTAURUS is climbing over a DEAD BRONTOSAUR, it’s gleaming eyes intent on JACK. The CARNOTAURUS leaps ...

BAM! BAM! BAM! The CARNOTAURUS is riddled with BULLETS and falls DEAD at JACK’S FEET!

HAYES hurries towards JACK, clutching his TOMMY GUN!

HAYES
(yelling)
Go! Go!

HAYES sends the rest of the MEN up a steep ROCKY SLOPE ... they SLIP and SLIDE on the SLIMY MOSS-COVERED ROCKS.

JACK doesn’t move. He looks around in mounting panic.

JACK
(frantic)
Carl!? Carl?! Get up!

DENHAM limps out of the PILE-UP, bloodied and covered in DUST - the CAMERA in his arms.

HAYES blasts at another CARNOTAURUS - it TOPPLES BACKWARDS.

HAYES
Run!

EXT. SLIMY SLOPE - DAY

The GROUP are desperately scrambling up the STEEP ROCKY SLOPE - slipping and sliding on the WET MOSS ... FOUR SURVIVING CARNOTAURS follow in pursuit ... the MEN start sliding backwards in their panic. The CARNOTAURS are sliding too, but their powerful legs are working furiously, propelling them closer and closer to the flailing SAILORS!

A SAILOR loses his footing completely ... he rolls past TWO CARNOTAURS before being grabbed by the JAWS of the THIRD.

The MEN grab hold of WEEDS, ROCKS ... ANYTHING, to get away from the DINOSAURS. They are crawling towards a network of NARROW FISSURES between HUGE ROCKS ... which the CARNOTAURS cannot squeeze through.

ANGLE ON: HERB is scrabbling up as best as he can with his bad leg ... DENHAM moves towards him, reaching desperately ...

DENHAM
Herb! Come on!

HERB
(gasping)
Mr Denham ... ! Take the tripod.

DENHAM
Come on Herb - I’m pulling you up.
Come on, hold on to your end.

HERB
(gasping)
You gotta go!!

DENHAM
I’m not going anywhere without you!

HERB
You gotta leave me!

HERB is straining to hold the TRIPOD when his GAMMY LEG gives way ... he SLIPS and ROLLS into the path of an oncoming CARNOTAUR!

CLOSE ON: DENHAM reacting in SHOCK as HERB is KILLED by the frenzying CARNOTAURS.

EXT. JUNGLE RUINS - DAY

ANGLE ON: KONG drops ANN onto the ground. She LANDS in a LIFELESS heap.

KONG has dropped ANN in a small RUINED COURTYARD, it’s WALLS are cracked and split by encroaching JUNGLE CREEPERS.

WIDE ON: KONG circles around ANN who lies MOTIONLESS on the GROUND. He PRODS her ROUGHLY with a FINGER ... no response. KONG GROWLS ... PRODS AGAIN ... ANN lies STILL.

CLOSE ON: ANN ... she slowly OPENS HER EYES! ANN looks warily towards KONG.

EXT. EDGE OF SWAMP - DAY

JACK, DENHAM, HAYES, BRUCE, JIMMY, LUMPY, CHOY and PRESTON clamber down a JAGGED ROCK face into lush sub-tropical VEGETATION. They are followed by a few surviving SAILORS - a bedraggled GROUP ... CUT, BRUISED, COVERED in DUST, SOAKED in SWEAT. Most of the GUNS are lost.

SAILORS slump to the ground, EXHAUSTED.

They are on a NARROW CLEARING at the edge of a MISTY SWAMP. SHEER CLIFFS rise out of the SWAMP on both sides of the SHORE.

HAYES
Jimmy, do a head count. I wanna know
how many injured and how bad -

LUMPY
(interrupting)
Injured? Four of us are dead!

CLOSE ON: DENHAM reaches with a trembling hand for his HIP FLASK. He takes a big SWIG ... and stands staring out over the SWAMP. PRESTON sits on A TREE STUMP nearby.

PRESTON
It’s not your fault. What happened to Herb - it’s no ones fault.

DENHAM
(soft realization)
You’re absolutely right, Preston ... And I’ll tell you something else. Herbert didn’t die for nothing. He died for what he believed in and I’m gonna honour that.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM reaching for that moment of self justification.

DENHAM (cont’d)
He died believing there is still some mystery left in this world - and we can all have a piece of it - for the price of an admission ticket!
(excited)
Goddammit Preston we’re gonna finish this film for Herb. We’ll finish it, and donate the proceeds to his wife and kids.

CLOSE ON: PRESTON, he has heard this all before.

WIDE ON: BRUCE stands amongst the SEATED SAILORS.

BRUCE
(desperate)
We gotta get back to the ship. Englehorn sails in nine hours.

JIMMY
So? We gotta find Miss Darrow.

BRUCE
Hey, did you hear me? We’re gonna be stranded here!

BRUCE becomes aware of JACK staring at him COLDLY. BRUCE self consciously clears his THROAT.

BRUCE (cont’d)
Miss Darrow was a great gal - no question. She was a wonderful person. It’s a terrible loss. We’re all gonna miss her.

JACK
I always knew you were nothing like the tough guy you play on screen - I just never figured you for a coward.

BRUCE
Hey, pal, wake up. Heroes don’t look like me - not in the real world. In the real world they’ve got bad teeth, a bald spot and a beer gut ... be seeing ya.

BRUCE walks off. HAYES turns to the rest of the GROUP.

HAYES
Anyone else?

A couple of SAILORS shuffle forward towards BRUCE.

EXT. JUNGLE RUINS - DAY

WIDE ON: KONG SITS on the EDGE of a RUIN, surveying the JUNGLE.

He SITS with his BACK to ANN, in the crumbling remains of an enclosed ENTRY AREA ... which also provides the only way out.

With a splintering rip, KONG pulls off one of the DINOSAUR’S LEGS and starts EATING it.

ANGLE ON: ANN, having feigned unconsciousness, she now cautiously searches for a way to escape.

CLOSE ON: ANN LIFTING HER HEAD, risking a quick look around. The WALLS are TOO STEEP to attempt an escape ...

... but there is a NARROW STAIRWAY across the COURTYARD, leading down into the JUNGLE.

INCH by INCH ANN starts to EDGE FORWARD, CRAWLING on her STOMACH towards the STAIRS. KONG is CHEWING NOISILY ... he SHIFTS HIS WEIGHT, half turning ... ANN FREEZES.

KONG GLANCES at ANN, who has resumed her LIFELESS POSE. KONG doesn’t appear to notice she’s moved several feet. He continues EATING ...

ANN again starts to EDGE FORWARD ... she is STARTLED when some CREEPY INSECTS swarm out of a CRACK in the FLAGSTONES, inches from her FACE!

With only a few feet left to go, ANN quietly rises and scurries towards the STAIRWAY. She clambers into the NARROW PASSAGE - finally out of KONG’S SIGHT! Glancing back over her shoulder, ANN hurries down the STAIRWAY towards FREEDOM!

EXT. BOTTOM OF STAIRWAY/JUNGLE - DAY

ANN pauses at the BOTTOM of the STAIRS, listening for sounds of KONG. All is QUIET ... she glances back up the stairs ... no sign of him there ...

... gathering all her strength ANN emerges from the PASSAGE and makes a bold run across the CLEARING towards the cover of the JUNGLE!

THUD! KONG'S FIST SLAMS DOWN in FRONT of ANN!

She GASPS and tries to change direction ... THUD! Another FIST blocks her way. KONG GROWLS ANGRILY!

ANN swings around and FACES KONG ... he SNARLS at HER, FURIOUS and DEADLY.

ANGLE ON: ANN suddenly ducks under KONG'S ARM and makes a last ditch attempt to escape! She is half way across the clearing when she TRIPS and FALLS!

ANGLE ON: KONG bounds over to ANN, SLAPPING his HANDS on the GROUND in a frenzy of excitement - he utters a GUTTERAL SQUEAL.

CLOSE ON: ANN, flat on the ground, eyes shut, lying still.

ANGLE ON: KONG .. circling around ANN, SUSPICIOUS. He PRODS her a couple of times ...no response. KONG moves on ... ANN'S EYES flick OPEN! At that moment KONG doubles back - CATCHING her out!

... ANN SPRINGS UP, looks at KONG for a desperate moment, wonders if she should run, decides she'll never make it ... and takes another PRATFALL!!

KONG cocks his HEAD! He GRIMACES, baring his teeth and CIRCLES her.

ANN repeats the COMIC FALL! KONG SLAPS his HANDS on the GROUND, SHAKES his HEAD and GROWLS.

ANN starts to draw upon her VAUDEVILLE ROUTINE, swaying drunkenly and falling, then bouncing back up ... working her timing around KONG'S reactions - he grows increasingly ENGAGED.

ANGLE ON: ANN BOUNCES UP ... PANTING ... BEADS of SWEAT trickle down her face. Her EYES dart between the JUNGLE and KONG, she's looking for her chance ...

... but KONG is a DEMANDING audience. He wants more ... he wants ANN to fall down again.

KONG PRODS ANN ROUGHLY, knocking her OFF HER FEET. She FALLS to the GROUND ... WINDED.

KONG slaps his hands on the GROUND, and lets out another EXCITED GROWL. He thumps the GROUND with his FISTS, and SHAKES his HEAD, delighted with the GAME.

ANN tries to get up - KONG pushes her over again! This time she stays on the GROUND, breathing HEAVILY.

THUMP! THUMP! THUMP! KONG wants more! He tries to PROD ANN into getting up and is STARTLED when she HITS his FINGER AWAY!

ANN
(gasping)
No! I said no!

KONG cocks his HEAD ... he THUMPS his FISTS on the GROUND.

THUMP! THUMP! THUMP!

ANN (cont'd)
(gasping)
That's all there is ... there isn't any more.

KONG RISES TO HIS FEET, and BEATS his CHEST, towering over ANN.

His HUGE FIST rises into the air and comes SLAMMING DOWN straight TOWARDS ANN!

CLOSE ON: ANN shuts her eyes ... KONG'S FIST THUDS into the ground inches away from her.

THUD! Another FIST SLAMS into the GROUND!

ANGLE ON: KONG ROARS and beats his chest in a dramatic display of ANGER and FRUSTRATION. He rips a TREE from the ground as his ANGER spirals into violent MADNESS.

CLOSE ON: ANN as the GROUND SHAKES with the fury of his RAGE. For a brief moment KONG and ANN lock in EYE CONTACT!

CLOSE ON: KONG stares at the small figure in his hand who is waiting for DEATH to come.

In this moment an UNFAMILIAR feeling wells inside him ... a half formed emotion he hasn't experienced much in his long life: he feels a connection to this tiny creature.

The SPARK of RAGE goes out in KONG'S EYES ...

KONG stares at ANN as a confusion of feelings wash over him.

KONG pulls back from ANN ... overcome by sudden UNCERTAINTY. He knows only that she has somehow disarmed him ... and this has in turn, DIMINISHED his power.

KONG starts to BACK AWAY from ANN - slowly at first, until DOUBT and FEAR compel him to move faster. Suddenly he turns away.

ANN watches as KONG lopes off. He pulls himself up and over a RUINED WALL and DISAPPEARS from SIGHT.

ANGLE ON: ANN, rising to her feet, finally free of her captor.

EXT. THICK JUNGLE - DAY

ANGLE ON: ANN hurrying through the JUNGLE ... pushing THROUGH thorns, TANGLED in VINES ... she is EXHAUSTED, THIRSTY.

EXT. LOG CHASM - DAY

WIDE ANGLE: DENHAM, JACK, HAYES, LUMPY, JIMMY, PRESTON and the remaining CREW have arrived at a DARK, VINE ENTANGLED CHASM ... spanning the narrow, but deadly RAVINE is a SINGLE FALLEN TREE.

WEAK SUNLIGHT filters through the DARK CANOPY above casting a SICKLY GREEN HUE over the place.

WIDE ON: HAYES, followed by JIMMY, leads the GROUP across the SLIMY, MOSS covered LOG ... the going is treacherous.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM struggling with the CAMERA ... JACK follows HAYES ... LUMPY helps CHOY. They put one foot in front of the other, trying not to let the DROP unnerve them.

ANGLE ON: HAYES suddenly stops ... tensely scanning the DARK RUINS on the other side of the CHASM ...

CREEPY POV: ... something is watching the MEN on the LOG.

JIMMY
(low voice)
What is it?

HAYES motions for JIMMY to be quiet. He stares intently into the DARKNESS of the FOREBODING RUINS.

JIMMY (cont'd)
(whispering)
Mr. Hayes ...?

HAYES turns and looks at JIMMY.

HAYES
If anything happens, I want you to run! Understand?

JIMMY
I'm not a coward - I ain't gonna run.

HAYES
(gently)
It's not about being brave, Jimmy.

CLOSE ON: JIMMY looking at HAYES uneasily, as he continues across the LOG.

EXT. FAR EDGE OF CHASM - DAY

ANGLE ON: HAYES is the first to step off the LOG, to the safety of the FAR BANK.

Ahead, some RUINS have collapsed, creating a LONG DARK TUNNEL.

CLOSE ON: HAYES ... peers into the DARKNESS of the TUNNEL.

ANGLE ON: A PAIR of GLEAMING EYES, reflecting LIGHT ... rushing towards HAYES.

HAYES
Go back! Back across the log!

The GROUP on the LOG FREEZE, start to BACK AWAY, slipping and sliding on the WET MOSS.

JIMMY
I ain’t gonna run.

HAYES
Get Jimmy out of here.

ANGLE ON: HAYES... SHOOTS into the DARKNESS of the TUNNEL.

KONG rampages out of the TUNNEL MOUTH! He SNATCHES HAYES with one SWEEP of his HAND.

CLOSE ON: HAYES in KONG’s HAND ...

JIMMY yells! KONG’s GAZE turns toward the MEN on the LOG!

JIMMY
No! Let him go!
(to HAYES)
Kill him! Kill him!

HAYES
(to KONG)
Look at me! Look at me!

JIMMY
(desperate)
Bring him down! Mr Hayes!

SLOWLY HAYES begins to lift his PISTOL up ... KONG’s GAZE locks back on HAYES ...

HAYES
(deadly calm)
You’ve gotta run, Jimmy.

JIMMY
No! I ain’t gonna run.

HAYES
Do as I say.
(to JIMMY)
Go with Jack ... All of you.

KONG stares at HAYES a BEAT ... HAYES suddenly raises his PISTOL at KONG to shoot!

HAYES (cont'd)
Run!

ANGLE ON: KONG HURLS HAYES at the SAILORS ... he flies over their heads like RAG-DOLL and smashes against the FAR WALL of the RAVINE with a sickening CRUNCH.

JIMMY
No!

JIMMY runs at KONG, blinded by tears of GRIEF and RAGE ... JACK KNOCKS him down and SHOOTS at KONG.

JACK
(desperate)
Shoot him!

WILD SHOOTING from the SAILORS, as they try to maintain BALANCE on the LOG.

KONG ROARS ... DESPERATE SAILORS try to back across the RAVINE.

KONG runs towards the LOG ... KONG'S FIST smashes at the LOG, knocking the men off balance. A SAILOR plummets off into the CHASM below.

EXT. THICK JUNGLE - DAY

ANGLE ON: ANN hurrying through the JUNGLE ... hearing the sound of gun fire.

ANN
Hey! Here! Over here!

She runs up the bank towards the noise.

EXT. FAR EDGE OF CHASM - DAY

WIDE ON: KONG has LIFTED the END of the LOG!

JACK, DENHAM, LUMPY, CHOY, JIMMY, PRESTON and THREE SAILORS hold on for dear life ... as KONG vigorously TWISTS and SHAKES the LOG, bucking the MEN into the air.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM skates on the MOSS and his CAMERA slides away, becoming WEDGED in the fork of a STUMP.

ALL AROUND panicked SAILORS are SHOOTING WILDLY, but fear and lack of balance throws their AIM OFF.

TWO SAILORS FALL ... CHOY scrambles for something to grab.

CHOY
Lumpy! Help me!

LUMPY desperately tries to reach CHOY'S hand ... but CHOY slips away into the ABYSS.

KONG ROARS with FRUSTRATION, and TOSSES the ENTIRE LOG into the CHASM!

QUICK IMAGE: DENHAM, PRESTON, JACK, JIMMY and LUMPY gripping the LOG as it FALLS!

QUICK IMAGE: PRESTON thrown off the LOG halfway down ... he manages to GRAB onto a ROCKY SHELF.

ANGLE ON: PRESTON is nearest to the FAR BANK ... he LEAPS, and MANAGES to catch hold of some hanging VINES, hauling himself up to safety.

ANGLE ON: The LOG plummets into a web of VINES, which arrest its FALL and sends it FLIPPING end on end, throwing the MEN CLEAR into mid-air... DENHAM, JACK and LUMPY land in SOFT MUD which cushions the impact of the LANDING.

EXT. VALLEY EDGE - DAY

ANN suddenly spins around ... the DISTANT SOUND of approaching FOOTSTEPS through the dense JUNGLE. A flicker of hope in ANN’S eyes! She starts hurrying towards the FOOTSTEPS!

CLOSE ON: ANN sees a distant PLUME of SMOKE - over FOUR MILES AWAY ... she hesitates.

She SLOWLY turns towards the SOUND of the FOOTSTEPS, which are now VERY CLOSE. Suddenly a LARGE 8 foot tall CARNIVOROUS DINOSAUR is in the GLADE before her!

ANGLE ON: ANN as she quietly backtracks. The CARNIVORE pauses, as if SENSING something. It’s NOSTRILS twitch. She ducks behind a WIDE TREE.

ANGLE ON: ANN PEERING around from behind the TREE ...

... there is another CARNIVORE BEHIND HER! It snares at her ... and pounces!

ANN leaps away ... she barely has time to start running before the CARNIVORE GIVES CHASE!

ANGLE ON: ANN races past the first CARNIVORE ... the creature turns it’s head ... and soon BOTH DINOSAURS are pursuing ANN.

EXT. HOLLOW TREE GLADE - DAY

ANGLE ON: ANN desperately heads towards the TANGLED ROOT SYSTEM of a HUGE TREE. She throws herself forward, as the CARNIVORE’S JAWS snap above her head.

ANGLE ON: ANN ROLLS and SCRAMBLES into a HOLLOW under the ROTTEN TREE.

ANGLE ON: The CARNIVORE CLAW at the TREE, trying to get at ANN.

ANN is lying beneath the ROOTS ... all she can see are LEGS and SLAVERING SNOUTS! The DINOSAUR RAM'S it's nose into the NARROW GAP.

SUDDENLY ... ANN sees the LEGS of one of her pursuers LIFT off the GROUND - it's taloned feet thrashing in mid-air.

The SECOND CARNIVORE turns and FLEES into the JUNGLE, as ANN is forced to watch the twitching legs SHUDDER and FLAIL.

The SOUND of BONE CRUNCHING ... CRACK! The CARNIVORE'S LEGS SPASM and go limp.

ANN is completely still, she dare not breathe ... whatever killed the CARNIVORE is now inches from her hiding PLACE.

CLOSE ON: ANN'S FACE ... as she sees something CRAWLING above her.

CLOSE ON: A DARK HOLE, beneath the tree ... Long FEELERS probe along the ROOF of the hole as a HUGE CENTIPEDE CRAWLS towards her.

ANN doesn't move as it inches towards her face. Suddenly she feels another crawling up over her shoulder.

ANN FREAKS! She desperately scrambles away from the CENTIPEDES ... rolls out on the OTHER SIDE of the TREE and stands to RUN...

... TOWERING above her, with the DEAD CARNIVORE hanging limply from it's HUGE JAWS, is a TYRANNOSAURUS REX!

ANN starts RUNNING! The TYRANNOSAUR crashes after her with the DEAD CARNIVORE still in it's MOUTH... as SHE races through the JUNGLE, dodging TREES, leaping over FALLEN LOGS, smashing through BUSHES, the TYRANNOSAUR POUNDING ever closer in pursuit. ANN can feel its hot sour BREATH blowing on the back of her neck! The HUGE JAWS of the HUGE BEAST open INCHES from ANN'S HEAD!

EXT. VALLEY EDGE - DAY

ANGLE ON: ANN slips down a MUDDY BANK, rolls over a LOG, and CRASHES NOISILY through a THICKET of PALMS ...

EXT. FALLEN TREE GLADE - DAY

ANGLE ON: ANN'S LUNGS are bursting, but the TYRANNOSAUR is GAINING on her ... she manages to scramble onto a FALLEN TREE that juts out over a small CLIFF. ANN clings onto the MOSSY LOG, and crawls towards the END ... the TYRANNOSAUR cannot possibly follow her.

She falls amongst the roots, lying as flat as possible, praying the TYRANNOSAUR doesn't see her. It seems to work and IT walks off. ANN HESITANTLY SITS up, thinking that she is at last free, only to turn and discover another is behind her!

With an almost delicate movement, the TYRANNOSAUR nudges the LOG with it's head ... causing it to lurch dramatically! The TYRANNOSAUR pushes HARDER, sending ANN over the SIDE ...

she just manages to grab hold of a BRANCH as she FALLS. ANN hangs on desperately ...

SHE SCREAMS!

ANN is HELPLESS ... The TYRANNOSAUR positions it’s HEAD for the FINAL LUNGE - gaping JAWS OPEN impossibly WIDE ...

AT THAT MOMENT: KONG CHARGES!

KONG meets the TYRANNOSAUR HEAD-ON at FULL SPEED! He swings, with his FOOT smashing the TYRANNOSAUR against the FALLEN LOG ... ANN loses her GRASP and FALLS ... as the DINOSAUR SPRAWLS onto the ground beside her ... in a flash, KONG CATCHES HER mid-fall ... ROLLING AWAY as the TYRANNOSAUR LEAPS UP and tries to take another swipe.

EXT. SKULL ISLAND JUNGLES - DAY

FAST FEVERED ACTION: A pair of CARNIVOROUS DINOSAURS leap towards HER! They cling onto KONG’S ARM, clawing furiously, snapping at ANN!

CLOSE ON: Saliva flies from wild, snapping jaws.

WIDE ON: KONG rolls over, THUMPING his arm against a TREE, crushing a DINOSAUR.

ANN is WINDED ... she clings to KONG’S FINGERS as he strangles the second BEAST with one hand, snapping it’s NECK with a BONE CRUNCHING sound.

SUDDENLY! A SECOND TYRANNOSAUR ATTACKS!!! He comes charging into shot, grabbing KONG’S ARM in his JAWS! KONG ROARS, sending both TYRANNOSAURS SPRAWLING TO THE GROUND. The FIRST TYRANNOSAUR scrambles back to it’s feet! KONG holds ANN protectively as he braces himself for the FIGHT OF HIS LIFE. The TWO TYRANNOSAURS CIRCLE him ... when SUDDENLY! A THIRD TYRANNOSAUR comes from behind.

They ATTACK KONG and ANN ... a BREATHTAKING FIGHT to the DEATH. KONG fights like a madman on three separate fronts ... Not only does he have to do battle with the TYRANNOSAURS, he is also PROTECTING ANN - constantly transferring her from ONE HAND to THE OTHER as the TYRANNOSAURS SNAP AT HER HEELS.

KONG punches and smashes with his fists, but he also uses wrestling-style headlocks and flips ... for a brief moment, ANN rolls free on the ground and has to dodge 25-foot DINOSAURS and the GORILLA, as the frenzied fight THUNDERS all around her.

The FIRST TYRANNOSAUR is taken out when KONG LIFTS up a HUGE BOULDER and SMASHES it against the TYRANNOSAUR’S HEAD.

KONG and the TWO TYRANNOSAURS slide down on to a ROCKY OUTCROP.

KONG outs the SECOND TYRANNOSAUR in a HEADLOCK, FLIPPING it over his shoulder, and throwing it down into the CHASM. CLINGING ONTO THE LEDGE KONG PULLS THE FIRST TYRANNOSAUR OFF THE LEDGE ... BUT AS IT FALLS it SNAPS AT KONG’S FOOT.

KONG ROARS IN PAIN AND TOGETHER THEY FALL DOWN INTO THE CHASM ... DOWN INTO THE VINES. KONG CONTINUES TO FIGHT THE TYRANNOSAUR, AS ANN IS LEFT SWINGING, CAUGHT UP IN THE VINES ... TOWARDS THE SECOND TYRANNOSAUR. HE SNAPS AT HER AS SHE COMES WITHIN INCHES OF HIS JAW.

WIDE ON: KONG SEES AND CLIMBS UP TOWARDS IT, PULLING IT DOWN. THEY ALL TUMBLE DEEPER INTO THE CHASM, AND SUDDENLY ANN FINDS HERSELF DANGLING FROM THE JAWS OF THE TYRANNOSAUR ABOVE THE JAWS OF ANOTHER! KONG SWINGS AND KICKS THE TYRANNOSAUR IN THE HEAD ... ANN LOSES HER GRIP AND PLUMMETS DOWN ... VINES BREAKING AS SHE FALLS. AND more SMASHING AGAINST THE CHASM WALLS ... SHE FALLS AND LANDS ON THE HEAD OF ANOTHER. FALLS AGAIN. SHE LANDS IN THE SWAMP. RUNS. IT CHASES.

EXT. CLEARING - DAY

WIDE ON: ANN faces the TYRANNOSAUR! SUDDENLY KONG THUDS DOWN BEHIND HER ... GLARING AT THE DINOSAUR ... ANN FINDS HERSELF CAUGHT BETWEEN THE TWO BEASTS. ANN WEIGHS UP HER OPTIONS BETWEEN BOTH ... and for a moment ANN & KONG LOCK EYES. SHE THEN BACKS BENEATH THE LOOMING FIGURE OF KONG.

THE TYRANNOSAUR SNARLS at KONG and he ROARS BACK ... KONG THROWS ANN GENTLY to the side as HE and the TYRANNOSAUR LUNGE at each other.

KONG GRABS HIS JAWS in BOTH HANDS forcing it OPEN and BITING the TYRANNOSAUR'S TONGUE. HE ROLLS the TYRANNOSAUR over and over, using all his strength to force the TYRANNOSAUR'S JAWS OPEN before RIPPING them clean APART at the HINGE! The TYRANNOSAUR sprawls back, DEAD.

KONG is PANTING HEAVILY ... he has been BITTEN, RAKED and CUT. He puts his foot on the LAST TYRANNOSAUR and BEATS HIS CHEST, TRIUMPHANTLY with a DEAFENING ROAR.

WIDE ON: KONG KICKS THE DINOSAUR OUT THE WAY. KONG ROARS ANGRILY - his blood is up, he is ready to take on the world. HE STANDS NEXT TO ANN, BUT HE WON'T LOOK AT HER DIRECTLY. SHE TRIES TO HIS ATTENTION BUT HE LOOKS AWAY. HE LUMBERS AWAY. KONG has DEADLY INTENT in his EYES. ANN watches as he DISAPPEARS into the JUNGLE.

ANGLE ON: ANN, CONFUSED for a minute ... THEN RUNS AFTER HIM.

ANN
Wait!

ANGLE ON: ANN is roughly SWUNG into the air, as KONG bounds off into the DEEP JUNGLE INTERIOR.

ANN as she is suddenly SNATCHED UP by KONG and SWUNG ROUGHLY on to his SHOULDER.

CLOSE ON: ANN HANGS ON for dear life as KONG GALLOPS into the JUNGLE.

KONG moves SWIFTLY and POWERFULLY through the JUNGLE with ANN on his SHOULDER ...

ANGLE ON: ANN as she looks up at the GIANT GORILLA ... the tension seems to go out of her body, she relaxes into his HAND ... for the first time since coming to SKULL ISLAND she feels SAFE.

EXT. BOTTOM OF CHASM - DAY

CLOSE ON: JACK STIRRING, immediately hearing the SCUTTLE OF INSECTS. HE ROLLS OVER and see's HUGE SPIDERS CRAWLING INTO THE PIT. HE staggers to his FEET ... REACHING INTO HIS PACK and PULLS from it A FLARE. THROWING it at the SPIDERS they CRAWL OFF.

DENHAM is lying nearby.

JACK
Carl!!!

DENHAM STIRS, MUMBLING IN PAIN BUT ALIVE.

JACK SEES JIMMY.

CLOSE ON: JIMMY is looking VACANTLY into space, JACK kneels down.

JACK (cont'd)
Jimmy?

CLOSE ON: JIMMY looks up at JACK, there are tears filling his eyes. He falls into JACK'S arms softly sobbing.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM sitting up... dawning realization in his eyes.

LUMPY, his back to CHOY ... he HOLDS CHOY'S HAND ... but CHOY'S FINGERS SLIDE LIMPLY out of LUMPY'S HAND ... LUMPY TURNS TO CHOY .. ONLY TO SEE THAT HE has DIED.

ANGLE ON: HAYES' eyes closed, his FACE peaceful, lying DEAD on the floor of the RAVINE.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM PEERING over a ROCK. The wreckage of the CAMERA lies smashed and broken on the CHASM floor ... a thin, shiny, thread of black FILM trailing from the smashed CAMERA body like spilt innards.

DENHAM reaches out and touches the EXPOSED FILM ... his dreams DESTROYED.

WIDE ON: THE FLARE SLOWLY DIES.

CLOSE ON: JACK cradling JIMMY in his ARMS. HE LOOKS UP as he SEES the INSECTS CRAWL BACK.

ANGLE ON: a HUGE six-foot CARNIVOROUS MAGGOT-THING squirms out! It crawls blindly towards LUMPY and CHOY!

ANGLE ON: LUMPY pulling CHOY'S BODY to safety, but both are ATTACKED by LARGE INSECTS, the size of dogs!

JACK tries to PULL THE GIANT CRAB-SPIDER OFF LUMPY, but instead it TURNS on him! More GIANT CRAB-SPIDERS JUMP at JACK.

LUMPY and CHOY are CONSUMED by the nightmarish BUGS.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM is WIELDING a short stick like a CLUB ... he smashes the HUGE BUGS in a psychotic explosion of RAGE, pulverizing their bodies into the DIRT!

All around, MONSTROSITIES OF NATURE emerge from DANK BURROWS and crawl towards the JACK, DENHAM and JIMMY ... these are HUGE INSECTILE MUTANTS - combinations of SPIDERS, CRABS, MANTISES and CENTIPEDES!

SUDDENLY JIMMY notices the TOMMY GUN sticking out of JACK'S PACK. GRABBING IT he aims at the INSECTS on JACK.

BAM! BAM! BAM! The GIANT INSECTS are blown apart!

JACK looks wildly around for DENHAM. THEY SEE that they're SURROUNDED BY SPIDERS. ANGLE ON: JACK desperately swings at the INSECTS with a STICK, whacking and stabbing them.

BAM! BAM! BAM! GUNSHOTS RING OUT. SPIDERS SWARM out of HOLES in the CLIFF AND DIE. JACK spins around ... confused.

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN and a COUPLE of SAILORS OPEN FIRE from the LIP of the CHASM, SHOOTING the SPIDERS into SMITHEREENS!

ANGLE ON: BRUCE SWINGS down from above, clinging to a VINE ... GUN BLAZING!

BRUCE proceeds to lay waste to the INSECTS ... those not blasted apart, scurrying away, back in to the darkness.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Moving purposefully along a well-known route to his LAIR, KONG launches himself across a LOW CHASM ... one hand reaching out to clutch at THICK VINES on the other side ...

SUDDENLY! The THICK VINES TEAR AWAY from the side of the CHASM WALL ... KONG falls backwards. ANN still clutched protectively to his CHEST he lands with a THUD!

ANN looks up alarmed!

KONG scrambles to his feet, GROWLING ... he places ANN on the GROUND pushing her protectively behind him.

KONG POV: LOOMING out of the CHASM WALL is a HUGE FACE!

CLOSE ON: ANN as her expression suddenly changes from FEAR to DAWNING COMPREHENSION.

ANN walks past KONG ... who emits another LOW, WARNING GROWL.

ANN
It's alright ... it's okay ...

ANN reaches the WALL and begins to pull away more of the VINES and CREEPERS to reveal ...

A life-size and very life-like eroded STATUE of a SITTING GIANT GORILLA ... the IMAGE of KONG ...

ANN turns back excitedly to KONG, trying to make him understand.

ANN (cont'd)
Look - it's you ... "Kong". See ... you. "Kong". This is you.

KONG looks from ANN to the HUGE STATUE ...

KONG POV: ANN is dwarfed by the STONE MONOLITH.

PUSH IN on KONG ... a growing sense of REALISATION as he comes to understand the STATUE is in fact a reflection of himself.

CLOSE ON: KONG looking down at his hands ... it's as if he is seeing his GNARLED, LEATHERY FINGERS for the first time.

ANN moves towards KONG ... he looks at her ... there is a VULNERABLE EXPRESSION on his FACE ... FEAR and SADNESS well in his EYES.

EXT. SKULL MOUNTAIN - DUSK

In VERTIGO-INDUCING shots, KONG climbs HIGHER and HIGHER - up into the HIGHEST PEAK of SKULL ISLAND ... carefully cradling ANN in his hand.

A sudden FLAP OF WINGS and FLICKERING SHADOW causes KONG to pull ANN close to his chest as a sinister BAT-TYPE CREATURE lunges at her ... these SCAVENGERS hover in the SKIES around SKULL MOUNTAIN ... they have eight-foot wing spans and TALONED FEET. Their faces are more reptile than bat.

EXT. KONG’S LAIR - DUSK

WIDE ON: KONG steps out of a LARGE ROUND CAVE onto a LEDGE that juts out high over SKULL ISLAND ...

This is KONG’S LAIR ... Over the ledge is a DIZZYING DROP of at least 1000-feet down to the JUNGLE.

The “VENTURE” can be seen - moored off the TIP of the ISLAND, some three miles away.

ANGLE ON: KONG gently places ANN on the GROUND ... ANN watches as he moves away and sits to one side of the LEDGE.

The SKY is a FIERY ORANGE as the SUN goes down ... SILHOUETTING the FIGURE of KONG ...

CLOSE ON: ANN looks around the CAVE taking in her STRANGE SURROUNDINGS ... her eyes fall upon a HUGE GORILLA SKULL and SKELETON which lie within the recesses of the CAVE ...

ANN turns and looks back at KONG ... realizing these are the BONES of his FOREBEARS ... that KONG was not always alone.

A SUDDEN flutter in the DARK recesses of the LAIR, a SINISTER SOUND, sends ANN scurrying towards KONG ...

KONG won’t look at her.

ANN breaks into a few tap steps ... NO RESPONSE. She leans down and picks up some STONES ... JUGGLING them, attempting to amuse him as she did before. KONG’s gaze remains averted ...

He looks out over the JUNGLE CANOPY. ANN follows his GAZE, taking in the RUGGED LANDSCAPE which is bathed in the last EVENING RAYS of the SUN. She stares out to sea, a RAIN CLOUD casts shadows over the OCEAN.

ANN
(softly)
It’s beautiful.

KONG sits QUIETLY staring out over the JUNGLE ... she looks up at him.

ANN (cont’d)
Beautiful.

ANN places her HAND against her heart.

ANN (cont’d)
Beau-ti-ful.

KONG’S BIG PAW unfurls beside ANN ... she hesitates for a moment, then CLIMBS into it.

ANGLE ON: KONG gently lifts ANN ...

WIDE ON: KONG with ANN, high above the JUNGLE, as the last of the DUSK LIGHT FADES.

EXT. LOG CHASM - DAY

CLOSE ON: HANDS reach down as ENGLEHORN and a SAILOR PULL PRESTON up the last stretch of the ROPE ...

ENGLEHORN turns and sees JACK climbing towards the TOP of the CHASM ... TWO SAILORS reaching down to help him.

DENHAM
Thank God.

ENGLEHORN
Don’t thank God, thank Mr. Baxter ...

CLOSE ON: BRUCE PULLING HIMSELF UP THE ROPE, gasping from exertion.

ENGLEHORN (cont’d)
He insisted on a rescue mission. Me? I knew you’d be okay ...

CLOSE ON: DENHAM looks up to see ENGLEHORN standing at the top of the CHASM. ENGLEHORN is watching him IMPASSIVELY.

ENGLEHORN (cont'd)
That’s the thing about cockroaches; no matter how many times you flush them down the toilet they always crawl back up the bowl!

ANGLE ON: DENHAM as he rises to his feet.

DENHAM
Hey buddy! I’m outta the bowl! I’m drying off my wings and trekking across the lid!

ENGLEHORN LOOKS at DENHAM a BEAT and then LOOKS across the CHASM in SURPRISE. DENHAM FOLLOWS HIS GAZE.

WIDE ON: JACK at the TOP of the opposite side of the CHASM ... a solitary figure, bloodied and torn.

ENGLEHORN
Driscoll ... don’t be a fool! Give it up, it’s useless ... She’s dead.

DENHAM
(quietly)
She’s not dead. Jack’s gonna bring her back.

ENGLEHORN turns to DENHAM.

DENHAM (cont'd)
And the ape will be hard on his heels. We can still come out of this thing okay -
(pause)
More than okay. Think about it, you've got a boat full of chloroform we can put to good use.

ENGLEHORN looks at DENHAM for a BEAT and then LAUGHS.

ENGLEHORN
You want to trap the Ape? I don't think so.

DENHAM
Isn't that what you do? Live animal capture? I heard you were the best.

ENGLEHORN stares at DENHAM for a moment, it is impossible to know what he is thinking.

DENHAM (cont'd)
Jack!

JACK looks at DENHAM ... DENHAM raises a hand in salute.

DENHAM (cont'd)
(calling)
Look after yourself!

JACK
Keep the Gate open.

DENHAM
Sure thing, buddy! Good luck!

ANGLE ON: JACK turns to go ... and disappears up the DARK TUNNEL.

DENHAM (cont'd)
I'm sorry.

EXT. THICK JUNGLE - DUSK

ANGLE ON: JACK struggles through the JUNGLE ... he breaks into CLEARING and STOPS SHORT as he see's the VAST VISTA of the MOUNTAIN in front of him.

INT. KONG'S LAIR - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: MOONLIGHT steams into the CAVE ... KONG sits on his LEDGE, HE CRADLES ANN IN HIS ARM.

CLOSE ON: ANN SLEEPS PEACEFULLY in his HAND.

ANGLE ON: KONG gently lifts ANN ... he STARES at her ... his FINGER touches ANN'S HAIR.

EXT. KONG’S LAIR - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK is climbing up through ROCKS towards KONG’S LAIR!

BAT-THINGS flutter ... AGITATED ... SENSING an INTRUDER.

CLOSE ON: JACK freezes.

ANGLE ON: A LARGE NUMBER of BAT-THINGS are GATHERING amid the STALACTITES that hang from the ROOF of the CAVERN.

He scans the LAIR for any sign of ANN ... but can’t see her. The OLD BONES of a LARGE GORILLA lie across the CAVE from JACK.

JACK CLIMBS higher INTO THE CAVE until at last he’s on THE LEDGE WITH KONG.

ANGLE ON: JACK moves forward, towards KONG. He stays in the SHADOWS of the ROCKS.

JACK CRAWLS FORWARD onto the LEDGE.

EXT. KONG’S LAIR - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK creeps CLOSE to the SLEEPING KONG’S BACK ... his SHOULDERS gently heaving with each breath.

CLOSE ON: JACK crawls past KONG’S FEET ... he looks in AMAZEMENT.

... ANN is ASLEEP in KONG’S HAND!

CLOSE ON: KONG GROWLS ... JACK SPINS AROUND ... KONG is growling in his sleep!

JACK is less than 8 FEET away from ANN.

CLOSE ON: ANN’S eyes OPEN. For a MOMENT she stares blankly at JACK ... then REALISATION arrives quickly - he has come for her! She looks at JACK with disbelief.

CLOSE ON: JACK looks at ANN, drawing a finger to his lips ... neither DARES to move, or make a sound.

VERY SLOWLY, JACK rises and steps towards ANN. He gestures for her to stay motionless in KONG’S PALM.

ANGLE ON: The salivating, carnivorous BAT-THINGS flutter out of the CAVE and SWARM around the LEDGE ... their FEAR of KONG is overwhelmed by the tempting SIGHT of JACK and ANN.

KONG STIRS.

CLOSE ON: JACK extends his HAND towards ANN ... she reaches out ... their FINGERS TOUCH ...

... and KONG’S EYES SNAP OPEN!

TIME seems to SLOW: JACK attempts to GRAB ANN'S WRIST, but KONG'S FINGERS CLOSE around ANN with stunning SPEED! KONG ROLLS to his FEET, pulling ANN away from JACK!

ANGLE ON: KONG SNARLS at JACK, who now stands HELPLESSLY before him.

The BAT-THINGS SWARM above KONG.

ANN
(yelling)
Jack, run!

ANGLE ON: KONG SWATS at JACK with his FREE HAND. ANN struggles and KICKS in his GRASP.

ANN (cont'd)
(yelling)
No!

KONG places ANN high on a SMALL LEDGE and CHARGES at JACK!

ANGLE ON: JACK ROLLS to the SIDE, KONG'S FISTS smashing DOWN around him!

KONG STAMPS on JACK, who DIVES CLEAR, just as the HUGE FOOT pummels into the GROUND.

CLOSE ON: JACK is LYING on the GROUND with KONG rearing above him ... there is NO ESCAPE!

CLOSE ON: KONG'S EYES, blazing with DEADLY INTENT. He LIFTS his FOOT, ready to SQUASH JACK like a bug!

AT THAT MOMENT! ANN SHRIEKS in PAIN!

KONG spins around ...

ANGLE ON: ANN is under ATTACK from the BAT-THINGS ... they are FRENZYING around ANN, sharp CLAWS lashing her! She cowers against the ROCK FACE, trying to protect herself.

CLOSE ON: KONG ... ROARING with ANGER ... he abandons JACK and CHARGES at the BAT-THINGS!

The FRENZIED BAT-THINGS ATTACK KONG EN MASSE as he snatches ANN from the LEDGE.

They strike at KONG and ANN like a swarm of giant bees. KONG ROARS and THRASHES OUT at them in a FRENZY!

ANGLE ON: KONG puts ANN down against the ROCKS, so he can use BOTH HANDS to strike at the DEADLY BAT-THINGS. With every sweep of his ARM, several BAT-THINGS are KNOCKED TO THE GROUND, but OTHERS claw at his HEAD and BODY.

ANGLE ON: JACK seizes his CHANCE! He rushes along the EDGE of the CLIFF towards ANN ... under the cover of an OVERHANG.

JACK and ANN are inches away from each other right behind KONG'S FEET!

JACK grabs ANN'S HAND and leads her towards the only possible escape route - the EDGE of the LEDGE, 1000 FEET above the JUNGLE!

JACK grabs a LARGE VINE, testing it's strength. He turns to Ann.

JACK
(urgent)
This way! Come on!

JACK pulls ANN to him and clambers over the EDGE of the DIZZYING DROP.

EXT. LEDGE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: JACK and ANN desperately CLIMB down the THICK VINES that hang over the LEDGE ... hand over hand ... the SOUND of KONG ROARING above, as he battles the BAT-THINGS.

EXT. KONG'S LAIR - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: SEVERAL BAT-THINGS are gripping and CLAWING KONG'S BACK in an effort to weaken the huge ape ... he suddenly POUNDS HIS BACK against the WALL of the CAVE, SQUASHING THEM ALL!

The surviving BAT-THINGS wheel away from KONG, HISSING ANGRILY ... 16 lie on the cave floor, STUNNED or DEAD. They FLUTTER towards the BACK OF THE CAVE, preparing their NEXT ATTACK.

KONG LOOKS for ANN ... she has GONE!

EXT. LEDGE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK and ANN are 60 FEET down the VINE ... JACK is trying to SWING towards the ROCK FACE ...

SUDDENLY! They start RISING!

WIDE ON: KONG is PULLING on the VINE! He lifts JACK and ANN towards HIM, like a fisherman reeling in a catch.

ANN tightens her grip on JACK'S SHOULDERS as BAT-THINGS flutter around THEM.

ANGLE ON: JACK and ANN are HELPLESS ... KONG almost HAS THEM! BAT-THINGS dive towards JACK and ANN!

A BAT-THING CLAWS at JACK'S HEAD. He releases ONE HAND and GRABS it's TALONED ANKLE.

JACK
(yelling)
Hang on to me!

ANN hangs onto JACK for dear life, as he GRABS the BAT-THINGS OTHER ANKLE.

ANGLE ON: JACK and ANN DESCENDING RAPIDLY ... the BAT-THING furiously FLAPPING it’s WINGS, but unable to stop the SPIRALLING plunge past the CLIFF FACE.

SOUNDS of KONG ROARING WITH GRIEF FROM THE LEDGE.

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT

The BAT-THING wobbles crazily in the sky, rapidly LOSING ENERGY ... JACK looks down - a FAST FLOWING RIVER is 50 feet below. He RELEASES HIS GRIP!

ANN SCREAMS as she and JACK fall into the RIVER ... they are immediately picked up by the current and SWEPT AWAY.

JACK and ANN are carried into the RAPIDS, swept down a small WATERFALL, surfacing into a FAST-FLOWING, but less violent part of the river.

INT. KONG’S LAIR - NIGHT

KONG ROARS with ANGER and GRIEF.

EXT. VILLAGE WALL

WIDE ON: The VILLAGE WALL AND SURROUNDING, as KONG’S ROAR echoes out over the ISLAND.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM & ENGLEHORN as they hear KONG’S ANGER.

EXT. RIVER BANK - PRE-DAWN

ANGLE ON: Half drowned JACK and ANN swim to the side of the RIVER, hauling themselves up on the MUDDY BANK.

KONG’S POV as he CRASHES THROUGH THE JUNGLE in HOT PURSUIT.

AN ENRAGED KONG is visible ... quickly descending from his mountain lair!

EXT. DENSE JUNGLE - PRE-DAWN

ANGLE ON: JACK and ANN racing through the JUNGLE.

EXT. WALL GROTTO - DAWN

ANGLE ON: LOW ANGLE of the WALL and ALTAR.

A LOW THUNDERING SOUND reverberates ... BIRDS LIFT off from TREES.

SUDDENLY! JACK and ANN appear from the undergrowth, RUNNING towards the CHASM and WALL ... the ALTAR BRIDGE has been raised, and hangs just out of reach.

JACK
(yelling)
Carl!

LOW ANGLE: The TOP of the WALL is deserted ...

ANN
Please! Somebody help us!

SOUNDTRACK: A ROAR ... growing louder ...

ANN casts a nervous glance over her shoulder.

TREES CRASH to the GROUND as KONG SMASHES his way through the JUNGLE towards the CLEARING ...

ANN looks at the deserted wall.

ANN (cont'd)
(ashen)
They've gone.

JACK
(yelling)
Carl? Oh Christ! Carl?

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE/WALL - DAWN

CLOSE ON: DENHAM silently listens to his FRIENDS calling.

WIDER ON: PRESTON, ENGLEHORN, BRUCE and JIMMY are waiting nearby.

PRESTON
Drop the bridge! Do it now, for chrissakes!

DENHAM
(quiet)
Not yet ... wait.

The GROUP react to KONG'S ROAR - now VERY CLOSE. A SAILOR with a MACHETE hovers near the ROPE, ready to cut it on DENHAM'S COMMAND.

DENHAM (cont'd)
Wait ...

PRESTON
(incensed)
No Carl ...

PRESTON suddenly leaps to his feet and SNATCHES the MACHETE. He slices through the ROPE ...

EXT. WALL GROTTO - DAWN

ANGLE ON: The BRIDGE DROPS, just as KONG explodes from the JUNGLE! KONG sees ANN and charges forward!

JACK and ANN race across the BRIDGE, getting to the other side just as KONG LEAPS the CHASM.

JACK leads ANN through the HOLE in the DOOR ... KONG SMASHES through the BAMBOO defences.

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE/WALL - DAWN

ANGLE ON: JACK and ANN run into the VILLAGE ... it looks deserted. DENHAM suddenly rises and walks past them towards the GATE, fixated on the ROARING BEAST, smashing at the TIMBERS.

CLOSE ON: ANN ... seeing GROUPS of SAILORS crouched behind rocks, with GRAPPLING HOOKS at the ready. PRESTON lies to one side, a RAG held against his BLEEDING FACE. ENGLEHORN gripping a CRATE OF CHLOROFORM BOTTLES.

ENGLEHORN
(shouting)
Now!!!

ANGLE ON: KONG SMASHES through the GATE! For a BRIEF MOMENT KONG makes EYE CONTACT with ANN ... she looks at him DESPAIRINGLY. He reaches towards her ...

DENHAM
(to ENGLEHORN)
Bring him down! Do it!

ANGLES ON: SAILORS THROW GRAPPLING HOOKS at KONG, HAULING on the ROPES.

ANN
No!

JACK
Are you out of your mind? Carl!

BRUCE rushes forward, pulling PRESTON to his feet, hustling him towards the TUNNEL EXIT.

ENGLEHORN yells at SAILORS poised on the TOP of the WALL.

DENHAM
Drop the net!

ANGLE ON: The SAILORS drop BOULDERS attached to a LARGE SHIP NET ... KONG is PUSHED to the GROUND by the WEIGHT.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM turns to ENGLEHORN.

DENHAM (cont'd)
Gas him!

ANN
(sobbing)
No! Please - don’t do this!

CLOSE ON: JACK holding ANN back.

JACK
Ann ... He’ll kill you!

ANN
No, he won’t.

ANGLE ON: KONG trying to get up ...

ENGLEHORN hurls the CHLOROFORM BOTTLE at KONG, smashing it on the ground right under his face.

ANN (cont'd)
No!

KONG breathes in the cloud of CHLOROFORM, he tries to push himself up.

ENGLEHORN
Keep him down!

SAILORS throw BOULDERS down from the TOP of the WALL, pummelling KONG’S HEAD.

ANN breaks away from JACK, rushes at ENGLEHORN, grabbing his arm just as he prepares to throw another CHLOROFORM BOTTLE.

ANN
Stop it! You’re killing him!

ENGLEHORN
Get her out of here! Get her out of his sight!

JACK takes ANN’S ARM ... DENHAM yells at him, as KONG’S RAGE intensifies.

DENHAM
Do it!

CLOSE ON: ANN STARES up at JACK.

ANN
Let go of me ...

CLOSE ON: JACK, he STARES at ANN, torn about what to do. His eyes flicker towards KONG. He makes his decision.

ANGLE ON: JACK pulling ANN by the HAND towards the TUNNEL ENTRANCE. She struggles to break free.

CLOSE ON: KONG WATCHING ANN being DRAGGED AWAY ... he EXPLODES with ANGER, suddenly RISING to his FEET, ripping the NET to PIECES! He SWINGS the ROPES AWAY, sending HAPLESS SAILORS flying through the AIR!

CLOSE ON: DENHAM looks on in HORROR, as his PLAN to CAPTURE KONG falls apart.

SAILOR
We can’t contain him!

ENGLEHORN
Kill it!

DENHAM
No!

ENGLEHORN
It’s over, you Goddamn lunatic!

DENHAM
I need him alive!

ENGLEHORN
Shoot it!!!

ANGLE ON: ENRAGED KONG throwing SAILORS and overturning STONE BUILDINGS.

CLOSE ON: JIMMY, gripping a TOMMY GUN, stands in front of KONG ... his POSE reflecting HAYES’ last stand. ENGLEHORN pulls JIMMY away by the collar, shoving him down the path.

ENGLEHORN (cont’d)
Jimmy - get out of here! Get to the boat!
(yelling)
All of you! Run!

KONG climbs DOWN THE WALL.

EXT. BEACH - DAWN

ANGLE ON: JACK running with ANN towards a waiting BOAT ... ANN fights as JACK tries to LIFT her on BOARD ... both turn!

JACK
Get in the boat!

ANN
(distraught)
No! It’s me he wants. I can stop this -

KONG stampedes down towards the COVE ... JIMMY stands his ground with his TOMMY GUN.

JACK yells at BRUCE.

JACK
Take her!

BRUCE takes ANN, as ENGLEHORN leaps into their BOAT ... he yells to the SAILORS.

ANN
Let me go to him!

ENGLEHORN
Row! Get the hell out of here!

ANGLE ON: JACK pushes JIMMY into the SECOND BOAT.

JACK
Jimmy! No!

JACK tries to prevent JIMMY from shooting at KONG, as SAILORS push their BOAT away from the shore.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM finds a CRATE of CHLOROFORM BOTTLES on the FLOOR of the BOAT. He snatches one up ... prepares to throw.

ANGLE ON: JIMMY manages to fire a BURST at KONG ... KONG CHARGES in FURY and THUMPS his FIST down on the BOW of the BOAT.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM is flung into the water, still clutching the CHLOROFORM BOTTLE.

ANGLE ON: KONG flings the BOAT against the COVE WALL, smashing it - sending JACK, JIMMY and SAILORS into the SEA!

ANN looks on in horror as JACK SURFACES, holding onto JIMMY, who is COUGHING SEA WATER.

KONG turns to ANN'S BOAT ... he looks at her ...

ANN
Go back!

KONG PAUSES at the SOUND of her VOICE ... as if sensing her fear for him.

ENGLEHORN
Hold her!

BRUCE holds ANN as ENGLEHORN suddenly FIRES a HARPOON into KONG'S KNEE ... KONG ROARS in PAIN and SINKS into the water. ANN is sobbing with DISTRESS.

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN starts LOADING a SECOND HARPOON ... DENHAM scrambles on to a ROCK, clutching the CHLOROFORM BOTTLE.

DENHAM
Wait!

ENGLEHORN ignores him, intent on killing KONG with his next HARPOON.

ANGLE ON: KONG starts CRAWLING painfully towards ANN. ENGLEHORN has almost finished LOADING.

ANN
Leave him alone!

ANGLE ON: DENHAM steadies himself on his rock as KONG crawls past. He hurls the CHLOROFORM BOTTLE ... it smashes against KONG'S FACE. KONG starts choking on the GAS.

ANGLE ON: JACK in the sea, holding the unconscious JIMMY, watching ANN from across the void of water ...

KONG starts to succumb to the GAS ... he reaches for ANN.

ANN watches KONG'S HAND reach out to her .... But she can no longer help him ... she has failed to stop this happening.

CLOSE ON: ANN turns away from KONG ... as he slumps into unconsciousness.

CLOSE ON: ANN and JACK make EYE CONTACT across the water .... She starts to CRY. JACK is unable to offer her any comfort.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM steps up to the UNCONSCIOUS KONG:

DENHAM
The whole world will pay to see this. We're millionaires, boys. I'll share it with all of you! In a few months his name will be up in lights on Broadway! "Kong - the Eighth Wonder of the World"!

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. BROADWAY THEATRE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: NEON LETTERS announce "KING KONG - the EIGHTH WONDER OF THE WORLD!" on a HUGE GLITTERING marquee.

WIDE ON: The bustle of TIMES SQUARE on a WINTER'S NIGHT, the colorful LIGHTS reflecting in newly FALLEN SNOW.

An EXCITED and CURIOUS CROWD are converging on the THEATRE - cabs are pulling up ... a QUEUE is forming ... SCALPERS are selling tickets outside the door.

CLOSE ON: BILLBOARDS outside the THEATRE proclaim "Relive the adventure of the Century ... see Miss Ann Darrow offered to the Beast!"

INT. THEATRE DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ANN is seated alone in a DRESSING ROOM, she is putting on STAGE MAKEUP. There is an emptiness in her face. She appears DISCONNECTED, her thoughts on things far away.

EXT. BROADWAY THEATRE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: CROWDS flowing into the THEATRE.

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE LOBBY - NIGHT

WIDE ON: The THEATRE LOBBY is teaming with people, handing COATS and HATS to the CHECK-IN GIRLS on the CLOAKROOM.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM who is WARMLY GREETING ZELMAN along with the SLEAZY and THUGGISH INVESTOR ... both of whom have STARLETS hanging on their arms ...

ANGLE ON: PRESTON watching from the BALCONY. He is looking at DENHAM.

REVERSE ON: DENHAM glancing up, catching the STRANGE LOOK in PRESTON'S EYE ...

ANGLE ON: DENHAM turns away and turns on an INSTANT SMILE for a waiting PHOTOGRAPHER.

PUSHING IN ON: PRESTON ...

ON THE SOUNDTRACK a sudden burst of UPROARIOUS LAUGHTER!

DREW V/O
Look at yourself! Look at what you've become!

INT. ARTY THEATRE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: EDGAR, a young man, DRESSED as a WOMAN is pulled to one side by his FRIEND, DREW. They are on the STAGE SET of a HOTEL LOBBY. A LARGE BOWL of FRUIT sits on a DECORATIVE SIDEBOARD.

DREW
No woman is worth this!

EDGAR
This woman is worth it. I've gotta win her back. I don't care what it takes.

DREW
She's not gonna buy it for a second!

EDGAR
Shuddup and hand me the grapefruit.

EDGAR proceeds to stuff a LARGE GRAPEFRUIT down his BRASSIERE.

THE AUDIENCE BREAKS into LAUGHTER. THE CAMERA PANS along a row in a SMALL FRINGE THEATRE, and comes to rest on a THEATRE PROGRAMME in the hands a MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN. The front cover reads: "Cry Havoc" by Jack Driscoll.

PULL FOCUS to reveal: JACK sitting behind the WOMAN, intently watching the stage ...

ANGLE ON: JAYNE a BLONDE ACTRESS who looks similar to ANN, and THELMA, her CONFIDANT, entering THE HOTEL LOBBY from the other side of the STAGE ...

THELMA
Tell me everything - every little detail!

They sit on a SOFA as EDGAR takes a seat in an ARMCHAIR nearby.

JAYNE
So, he took me to a fancy French restaurant ...

THELMA
French, huh?

JAYNE
Anyway about half way through the whore derves - he clutches my hand ...

THELMA
He clutches your hand?!

EDGAR
(falsetto)
It felt like the right thing to do at the time.
(falsetto)
Oh! I’m sorry - I couldn’t help but over-hear!

The TWO WOMEN look at him a beat before turning back to each other.

JAYNE
He’s looking into my eyes -

THELMA
And that’s when he told you how he felt?

JAYNE
No - he never said it.

THELMA
He never said it?!

EDGAR
(falsetto)
He probably thought he didn’t need to say it.

AUDIENCE LAUGHS!

THELMA
Then how does she know that it’s real?

JAYNE
He said it was not about the words.

THELMA
Please - if you feel it, you say it. It’s really very simple.

JAYNE
He said we'd talk about it later. Only there was no later ...

CAMERA PUSHES IN on JACK ....

JAYNE (cont'd)
It never happened.
(reflective)
I just thought that maybe this one time, things might actually work out - which was really very ...

CLOSE ON: JACK, hearing his own words ...

JACK/JAYNE
... foolish ....

SUDDENLY JACK stands and making his way past surprised AUDIENCE MEMBERS, heads for the EXIT.

THELMA
Men! They'll give you the world ... But they let the one thing that truly matters slip through their fingers. All for the sake of three little words!

EDGAR
(indignant)
The three hardest words in the English language!

AUDIENCE MEMBERS break into fresh LAUGHTER as JACK leaves the THEATRE.

EXT. ARTY THEATRE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: JACK strides out of the SMALL THEATRE, pulling his collar up against the cold. Above him, a simple BILLBOARD advertises "Cry Havoc, a new play by Jack Driscoll"

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE WINGS - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: CARL DENHAM quietly waiting in the WINGS of the HUGE BROADWAY THEATRE. It is a moment of calm ... he is feeling a mixture of PRIDE and ANTICIPATION.

The SOUND of KONG BREATHING - a RASPING WEAK GROWL - causes DENHAM to flick his eyes to the darkened AREA behind the CURTAIN.

INT. THEATRE DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ANN in HER DRESSING ROOM pulling on her COSTUME.

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: The HUGE AUDITORIUM is filled with nearly 2000 people. The EXCITEMENT in the air is PALPABLE.

WIDE ON: The LARGE CROWD APPLAUDS as DENHAM strides onto the stage in the GLARE of THE SINGLE SPOTLIGHT. He waves enthusiastically to the AUDIENCE, basking in the acclaim he has wanted for so long.

DENHAM
Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Ladies and Gentlemen, I am here to tell you a very strange story ... a story of our adventure in which seventeen of our party suffered horrible deaths! Their lives lost in pursuit of a savage Beast, a monstrous aberration of nature! But even the meanest brute can be tamed. Yes, Ladies and Gentlemen, as you will see, the Beast was no match for the charms of a girl - a girl from New York ... who melted his heart. Bringing to mind that old Arabian proverb ...

INT. THEATRE DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: ANN, now in a WHITE VELVET GOWN, a look of SADNESS in her EYES.

DENHAM V/O cont'd)
"And lo the Beast looked upon the face of Beauty and Beauty stayed his hand ... and from that day forward he was as one dead ..."

A VOICE interrupts ANN'S contemplation.

STAGE MANAGER
You're on, Miss Darrow, five minutes.

ANN stands up ...

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE STAGE - NIGHT

DENHAM basking in the SPOTLIGHT.

DENHAM
And now Ladies & Gentlemen, I'm going to show you the greatest thing your eyes have ever beheld. He was a King in the world he knew but he comes to you now ... a captive!

DENHAM lifts his ARMS ...

DENHAM (cont'd)
Ladies and gentlemen: I give you Kong - the Eighth Wonder of the World!!

STAGE MUSIC strikes up.

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE STAGE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: With a DRAMATIC FLOURISH the CURTAIN slowly rises to REVEAL:

KONG sitting slumped and unresponsive, his WRISTS MANACLED to a STEEL SCAFFOLD. Other MANACLES and CHAINS secure his ANKLES, NECK and WAIST.

There is a BIG GASP from the AUDIENCE ... KONG'S sheer size is OVERWHELMING.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM ... euphoric, as the collective GASP of 2000 PEOPLE washes over him.

ANGLE ON: KONG's head lolls, as if he is barely aware of his surroundings ...

DENHAM
Don't be alarmed, ladies and gentlemen. It is perfectly safe. These chains are made of chrome steel!

WILD APPLAUSE!

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK, jostled on a crowded NEW YORK STREET hurrying rapidly along the sidewalk.

JACK crosses the BUSY ROAD, heading straight towards the BROADWAY THEATRE.

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE STAGE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: DENHAM on stage with KONG ...

DENHAM
(dramatic)
Observe if you will, I am touching the beast! I am actually laying my hand on the twenty-five foot gorilla.

DENHAM reaches up and touches KONG'S LEG. KONG'S foot twitches slightly causing DENHAM to jump back in fright ...

CLOSE ON: JACK enters the AUDITORIUM.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM signals to the STAGE HANDS in the WINGS ...

ANGLE ON: A STAGE HAND begins to CRANK a WINCH ... the CHAINS at KONG'S WRISTS tighten ... the AUDIENCE GASP as KONG is SLOWLY FORCED to his FULL HEIGHT ...

ANGLE ON: JACK walks into the BACK of the BALCONY of the darkened AUDITORIUM. He quietly makes his way down the SHADOWED AISLE.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM turns back to face the AUDIENCE ...

DENHAM (cont'd)
We have in the auditorium tonight, a surprise guest. The real life hero of this story ... the man who hunted down the mighty "Kong"!

CLOSE ON: JACK as he watches DENHAM, unnerved by the SPECTACLE.

DENHAM (cont'd)
The man who risked all to win the freedom of a helpless female! A big hand for ... Mr. Bruce Baxter!

ANGLE ON: BRUCE striding on stage, dressed as the Great White Hunter.

HUGE AUDIENCE ACCLAIM! DENHAM shakes BRUCE by the hand, slapping him on the BACK as if they were OLD FRIENDS ... BRUCE turns and acknowledges the ADULATION of the AUDIENCE.

A LINE of DANCERS, dressed as cheesy NATIVES appear from either side of the stage. They dance to the beat, playing to KONG, who stares impassively at them.

A PULSATING DRUM BEAT begins to fill the AUDITORIUM!

DENHAM (cont'd)
Ladies and Gentlemen, imagine if you will an uncharted island ... a forgotten fragment from another time ... And clinging to life in this savage place, imagine a people untutored in the ways of the civilised world. A people who have dwelt all their lives in the shadow of Fear! In the shadow of ... "Kong"!

CLOSE ON: JACK ... staring TRANSFIXED at the STAGE.

BEHIND him in the DARKNESS of the AUDITORIUM a FIGURE rises from a SEAT.

PRESTON
(quietly)
He was right ...

JACK turns to find PRESTON standing beside him ...

PRESTON (cont'd)
... about there still being some mystery left in this world ...

CLOSE ON: PRESTON stares down at the figure of DENHAM, standing to one side of the STAGE ...

PRESTON (cont'd)
(softly)
And we can all have a piece of it ... for the price of an admission ticket.

ANGLE ON: PRESTON turns to look at JACK ... JACK'S EYES flicker towards the SCAR which runs down one side of PRESTON'S CHEEK ...

JACK
(quietly)
That's the thing you come to learn about Carl ... his unfailing ability to destroy the things he loves.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM as he strides to the FRONT of the STAGE ...

DENHAM
Please remain calm, Ladies and Gentlemen - for we now come to the climax of this savage ritual ... the Sacrifice of a beautiful young girl!

The CROWD erupts into WILD CHEERS!

The LIGHTS DIM ... The DRUM BEAT increases ... The NATIVE DANCERS fall to their KNEES in WORSHIP as a PLATFORM rises from beneath the STAGE ...

DENHAM (cont'd)
Behold her terror as she is offered up to the mighty "Kong"! A big hand folks for the bravest girl I ever met! Miss Ann Darrow!

A DRAMATIC SILHOUETTE of a WOMAN dressed in a WHITE SILK GOWN. She is tied to a wooden ALTAR, her BACK to the audience.

CLOSE ON: KONG, a flicker of HOPE in his EYES.

The TINY FIGURE tethered to the ALTAR looks up! For the first time KONG sees her FACE.

ANGLE ON: KONG utterly CONFUSED; this is NOT ANN, but a woman in a blonde wig, dressed to look LIKE HER!

KONG roars!

FAKE ANN thrashes around SCREAMING unconvincingly!

FAKE ANN
No! No! Help me, no!

ANGLE ON: KONG staring at FAKE ANN with mounting CONFUSION and ANGER!

CLOSE ON: JACK as he realises it is not ANN on stage. He turns to PRESTON.

JACK
Where is she??

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE STAGE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: JACK glances at PRESTON, who turns away looking UNCOMFORTABLE.

JACK
(urgent)
Where's Ann?

PRESTON
I've no idea. I heard he offered her all kinds of money and she turned him down flat.

INT. SHOWGIRL'S THEATRE - NIGHT

SLOW, DREAMY MUSIC ... A FEATHERED FAN sweeps across a FACE to reveal ... ANN.

WIDER: ANN dancing in a LINE of CHORUS GIRLS, all identically dressed ...

ANGLE ON: A MALE DANCER slides into VIEW ... the STAR of the SHOW ... the WOMEN behind him, merely window dressing.

PUSH IN: on ANN as she goes through the motions of the routine ... a look of DISTANT SORROW on her FACE.

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE STAGE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: PHOTOGRAPHERS push forward, LIGHT BULBS flash at KONG who ROARS ANGRILY.

DENHAM signals to BRUCE to join him ... behind them we can see the FAKE ANN still performing her feigned terror ...

DENHAM
Here's your story, boys - "Beauty and the Man who saved her from the Beast".

ANGLE ON: JACK watching from the BALCONY ... he STARES at KONG who is BREATHING HARD through his NOSTRILS ... JACK can feel KONG'S mounting ANGER.

JACK
(turning to PRESTON)
We have get these people out of here -

JACK’S eyes turn to the AUDIENCE seated nearby ... he gets up and attempts to usher people out.

JACK (cont’d)
Everyone has to leave.

CLOSE ON: KONG, his ANGER growing as he struggles against his chains.

PRESS MAN 2
How did you feel, Mr. Baxter - when you were on the island?

BRUCE
Well to be honest with you, I had some anxious moments ...

The MEMBERS of the PRESS all nod, understandingly ...

BRUCE (cont’d)
For a while there it looked like I wasn’t going to get paid ... But as it turned out, Mr. Denham here has been more than generous -

CLOSE ON: DENHAM ...

DENHAM
Let him roar! It makes a swell picture!!!

ANGLE ON: DENHAM and BRUCE as they POSE for the PHOTOGRAPHERS.

ANGLE ON: JACK heading down the STAIRS, trying to convince members of the audience to leave.

JACK
Head for the exits ...

AUDIENCE 2
Get your own seat Buddy - you ain’t having mine.

The CONFUSED AUDIENCE continue to APPLAUD ...

CLOSE ON: The FAKE ANN’S EYES suddenly WIDEN as:

KONG rips one of his MANACLED HANDS FREE!

FAKE ANN lets out her most CONVINCING SCREAM!

JOURNALISTS and PHOTOGRAPHERS start backing away, snapping pictures as they retreat ... FLASHBULBS POP ... KONG COWERS BACK shielding his eyes ... ROARING in DEFIANCE!

ANOTHER DEAFENING ROAR!!! DENHAM looks up, AWESTRUCK, as he sees KONG TEARING FREE of the rest of his CHAINS!!

The AUDIENCE BEGIN TO RISE from their SEATS ... PANIC sets in!

AAAARRRRRGH!!!!! The FAKE ANN tethered to the ALTAR screams again for help!

KONG reaches across and picks her up, HURLING the FAKE ANN and the ALTAR across the wide AUDITORIUM!

SLOW MOTION: LINKS snapping ... CHAINS breaking, BOLTS lifting from the FLOOR!

With a MIGHTY FLOURISH, KONG rips off his WAIST RESTRAINTS and is at last completely FREE! The AUDIENCE RUSH the EXITS in a COLLECTIVE STAMPEDE!

KONG swings from the STAGE into the FRONT ROW SEATS ... STOMPING and CRUSHING the slower moving PATRONS!

EXT. BROADWAY THEATRE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: PATRONS rush out of the THEATRE into the street.

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE STAGE - NIGHT

KONG ROARS and hurls a PLASTER CORNICE across the length of the THEATRE - straight at JACK!

KONG is now below the BALCONY LEVEL ...

In that moment KONG turns ... and sees JACK! For a brief second their EYES LOCK!

ANGLE ON: KONG using his amazing STRENGTH to SWING up to the UPPER LEVEL BOXES ... with a LEAP he jumps on to the BALCONY ... the BALCONY crumbles under his WEIGHT ... sending DOZENS OF PEOPLE plummeting into the STALLS.

JACK turns and RUNS for the DOOR as KONG struggles to REACH him.

JACK reaches the EXIT, turns and looks back at KONG, a mixture of DREAD and AWE on his FACE.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM remains in the middle of the THEATRE mesmerized by the spectacle of KONG’S unleashing power!

EXT. BROADWAY - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK emerges from the THEATRE, all around him PANICKED PEOPLE run in TERROR!

BOOM! JACK turns in time to see ...

The VAST THEATRE WALL explodes onto the street, showering PEOPLE and CARS with BRICKS and STEEL ... KONG bursts into the MIDDLE OF THE ROAD!!!

ANGLE ON: JACK stares up in horror as KONG heads straight for him ... JACK is going to DIE!

With an ANGUISHED ROAR the HUGE GORILLA stumbles past JACK into the BRIGHT LIGHTS of TIMES SQUARE ... he hasn't seen JACK!

KONG spins around reacting with terrified confusion to the STRANGENESS of CARS, TRUCKS, TRAMS, LIGHTS ... screaming people everywhere!

JACK watches as KONG'S FEAR builds to a growing sense of ANGER and FRUSTRATION!

ANGLE ON: KONG circles TIMES SQUARE ... snatching up any WOMAN with BLONDE HAIR ... desperately looking for ANN!

DODGING bits of FLYING DEBRIS, JACK tires to push his way through CROWDS of FLEEING PEOPLE towards KONG...

CAR WINDSCREEN POV ... KONG STOMPS on the CAR in FRONT, LIFTS FOOT and STOMPS over CAMERA.

ANGLE ON: A TRAM heading straight for KONG ... the GIANT GORILLA THRUSTS out an ARM PROTECTIVELY ... KONG pulls his arm back ... TRAM firmly attached! KONG'S FIST is CAUGHT in the TRAM'S WINDOWS!

CLOSE ON: JACK ... as he realises what KONG is doing ...

JACK
(under his breath)
Oh Jesus ...

ANGLE ON: JACK as he watches KONG heading off down BROADWAY.

CRASHING off BUILDINGS KONG CAREENS out of TIMES SQUARE ...

EXT. NEW YORK SHABBY THEATRE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ANN emerges from a SHABBY THEATRE, just as SEVERAL POLICE CARS drive past at SPEED.

ANN runs to an INTERSECTION and looks up the STREET. Several blocks away PANDEMONIUM is erupting outside a BROADWAY THEATRE.

ANN starts to RUN.

EXT. BROADWAY/NEW YORK - NIGHT

JACK spies a CAB that has STOPPED in the MIDDLE of the ROAD ... it's DRIVER watching the scene, MOUTH AGAPE!

ANGLE ON: JACK jumping into the BACK of the CAB. He gestures towards KONG!

JACK
Follow that ape!

ANGLE ON: The CAB DRIVER jumping out of the CAB.

CABBIE
It's all yours, Buddy!

ANGLE ON: JACK scrambling into the FRONT SEAT of the CAB ... he throws it into GEAR and heads off after KONG!

ANGLE ON: KONG reacts like a CORNERED ANIMAL in a BLIND PANIC ... FLAILING his arms in PANIC, the TRAM swinging through the air and SMASHING into BUILDINGS like a GIANT CLUB!

ANGLE ON: JACK drives the CAB DOWN BROADWAY ... swerving to MISS bits of TRAM that disintegrate off the FIST of KONG ...

JACK accelerates, straight through the LEGS of the GIANT GORILLA!

ANGLE ON: the CAB SPINS so that it now is facing KONG!

ANGLE ON: KONG ... his FIST about to SMASH down on a TRAM full of PEOPLE! The BLARE of a CAR HORN makes him turn ... he hesitates ... realizing who is behind the wheel of the CAB!

JACK'S POV ... as KONG comes closer. PANICKING DRIVERS PILE into each other. JACK desperately tries his door, but it won't open, he is WEDGED IN by CARS on either side.

KONG LIFTS THE CAR directly in front - HIGH ABOVE HIS HEAD, throwing it into a BUILDING.

EXT/INT. STREETS/CAB - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: JACK'S FOOT depresses ACCELERATOR.

The WHEELS are SPINNING WILDLY ... in a CLOUD OF BURNING RUBBER, the CAB speeds down the ROAD, weaving in and out of the path cut by KONG'S DESTRUCTION.

KONG BOUNDS AFTER THE CAB, running on all FOURS with incredible speed.

JACK crosses an INTERSECTION, driving up on the SIDEWALK to get a CLEARER DRIVING LANE ... PEDESTRIANS scatter - not only from the CAB, but from KONG who is in HOT PURSUIT.

The CAB SLEWS across the STREET, disappearing up a TINY ALLEY, only just wide enough for the CAB, but TOO NARROW for KONG.

JACK glances back at KONG, ROARING with frustration at the ALLEY ENTRANCE.

EXT/INT. HERALD SQ/CAB - NIGHT

JACK speeds out of the ALLEY and CROSSES the TRAFFIC FLOW, causing much BRAKING and HORN action. He gets SLOWED in THICK TRAFFIC ...

KONG BURSTS his way out of the ALLEY ENTRANCE ... RIGHT IN FRONT OF JACK'S CAB!!!

JACK SWERVES on to the SIDEWALK ...

JACK steers the CAB wildly along the SIDEWALK scattering PEDESTRIANS in all directions!

KONG follows in HOT PURSUIT!

JACK sends the CAB into a couple of TIGHT TURNS ... he rounds a bend and DRIVES straight into a FRUIT VENDOR'S STALL!

ANGLE ON: The CAB, covered by the RUINED STALL, SLAMS into the WALL of a BUILDING. JACK is thrown forward on IMPACT ...

KONG rounds the corner and BOUNDS PAST JACK'S CAB ... hidden beneath the RUBBLE ...

KONG searches for the CAB, ROARING in FRUSTRATION!

KONG'S HUGE EYES glance in the WINDOW, just as:

KONG suddenly FREEZES! He inclines his HEAD; unsure if what he is seeing is REAL.

KONG'S POV: ANN is walking towards him!

KONG tentatively inches TOWARDS ANN!

ANN stops ... KONG stops. They stare at each other for a long moment ... ANN offers KONG a small SMILE, and reaches her HAND out hesitantly towards his ARM.

KONG gently picks ANN up ... his EYES never leaving her FACE.

ANN holds tightly on to his HAND and they DISAPPEAR into the night.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

WIDE ON: KONG carries ANN through the snow covered trees of CENTRAL PARK ...

SUDDENLY he finds himself stepping on to the FROZEN POND ...

ANGLE ON: The GIANT GORILLA slipping on the ICE ... as soon as his hand hits the ice he slips ...

KONG stands up and growls ... he slips again, spinning this time ... it becomes a game ...

CLOSE ON: ANN realizing what is happening ... She starts to LAUGH.

LIGHTS spin past ... it is a brief moment of respite ...

SUDDENLY! BULLETS RAIN down on KONG & ANN ... KONG rears back in FRIGHT.

ANGLE ON: MILITARY TRUCK as it launches ROCKETS at KONG.

COMMANDER
Fire!

MORE RAIN down as SMASH! The ICE CRACKS under the weight of the MORTAR FIRE ...

ROARING with ANGER KONG struggles out from the FROZEN POND and flees ... back on to the STREETS of NEW YORK.

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - NIGHT

KONG bounds out into the streets, swaying to avoid the bullet fire, angrily smashing cars out the way.

ANGLE ON: The TRUCK flipping through the AIR as KONG continues on his way through the STREETS ...

KONG ROARS DEFIANTLY as the GUN’S BARREL swings in their direction!

The STREETS are TEEMING with these VEHICLES as the ARMY spreads out across town in the hunt for KONG.

ARMY VEHICLES are RACING along the QUIET STREETS ... an ARMORED CAR is firing at KONG ... followed by a TRUCK carrying a MOBILE SEARCHLIGHT.

KONG bounds into a construction site, climbing with ease up through the frame.

A MILITARY TRUCK races through the STREETS of NEW YORK ... still firing at KONG.

ANGLE ON: ANN clutches KONG as he BOUNDS along the roofs at HIGH SPEED!

ANOTHER SEARCHLIGHT FINDS HIM! ... and ANOTHER! The ARMY are closing in. MACHINE-GUN FIRE rips past him as he LEAPS another GREAT DISTANCE across the STREET. ANN clings on, shutting her EYES.

As BULLETS WHIZZ around him, KONG LEAPS ACROSS THE STREET - 10 stories high! He LANDS on the opposite ROOFTOP and BOUNDS AWAY.

ANGLE ON: JACK running along the STREET, following a STREAM of POLICE and MILIARY VEHICLES.

ARMORED CARS and MOBILE SEARCHLIGHTS converge on KONG ... ahead of him, across the CAVERN of 34th STREET, rises the SHEER WALL of the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING!!!

An MOBILE ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUN screeches to a HALT on 34th STREET.

ANGLE ON: An ARMY COMMANDER shouts rapid orders to his MEN.

COMMANDER
Standby to fire!

The CAPTAIN runs up to the ARMY COMMANDER ...

CAPTAIN
I can’t give that order! Sir, the ape’s holding a girl -

ANGLE ON: The ARMY COMMANDER brushes past the CAPTAIN ...

COMMANDER
(drily)
Then I guess it’s her unlucky day.
(shouts to his GUNNERS)
Take aim!

CAPTAIN
Sir ...?!

COMMANDER
(to his GUNNERS)
Shoot to kill!
(yells)
Fire!

POV: Looking up CROSS-HAIRS at KONG, high on the side of the building - a SITTING DUCK.

A SUDDEN BLOOM of FIRE erupts from the GUN BARREL speeding straight towards KONG and ANN!

ANGLE ON: KONG leaps across 34th STREET just as BOOM! The MISSILE hits the BUILDING’S ROOF!

WIDE ON: KONG smashes into the SIDE of the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING!

GLASS RAINS DOWN 12 STORIES TO THE STREET as KONG uses WINDOWS for HAND and FOOT HOLDS. He is ONE-HANDED - his other hand still holding ANN protectively to his CHEST.

JACK runs forward amidst the noise and confusion he stares up at the long length of the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING ...

PUSH IN: JACK staring at the unguarded, darkened entrance to the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING ...

EXT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING/MANHATTAN - PRE DAWN

Looking at MANHATTAN from the HARBOUR ... the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING rises from the MIDTOWN area like a giant solitary finger, reaching for the heavens.

WIDE SHOT ... KONG climbing the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING, silhouetted against the LIGHTENING SKY.

LOOKING DOWN ... ANN clings to KONG’S SHOULDER, a DIZZYING 1000 foot drop to the street below.

KONG climbs onto the OBSERVATION DECK of the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING. He gently places ANN down ... a CHILL WIND catches at her DRESS. ANN looks up at KONG ... BLOOD slowly seeps from his numerous WOUNDS ...

KONG sits still, staring out across the CITY ...

To the EAST the sun is rising, casting an soft glow over buildings ... glinting off the WATERS of the EAST...

KONG looks down at ANN ... he gestures with his hands ... touching his heart ... ANN looks at him confused, he repeats the gesture ...

CLOSE ON: ANN, she understands ...

ANN
(whisper)
Beautiful ...

Here, high above the squalor and the noise and confusion, the city lies quiet, almost peaceful ...

ANN (cont'd)
Yes ... yes it is.

WIDER ... KONG cradles ANN in his HAND as they SHARE the moment.

WIDE ON: KONG and ANN sit on the LEDGE, watching the SUN RISE. SIX NAVAL BIPLANES suddenly ROAR INTO SHOT, sweeping low over the DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT ... and closing in on KONG. These are TWO-SEATERS, armed with TWIN MACHINE-GUNS for the PILOT, and a flexible MACHINE-GUN for the OBSERVER.

CLOSE ON: PILOT'S FINGER on trigger.

A COLD WIND blows ANN'S hair as she watches the PLANES approach. KONG is UNEASY about these BUZZING PREDATORS as they CIRCLE above him.

The NAVAL PLANES peel off into an ATTACKING DIVE at KONG.

DOWN GUN-SIGHTS ... drifting left and right as KONG grows in size ... LOCKED ON!

KONG is suddenly FEARFUL ... he INSTINCTIVELY pushes ANN towards the BUILDING'S WALL!

The PLANES split to either side of KONG, ZOOMING straight at him!

KONG ROARS at the PLANES, as if issuing a CHALLENGE.

ANN is screaming ...

ANN (cont'd)
No!!!

THE SIX NAVAL PLANES fly at KONG from different directions! MACHINE-GUNS START FIRING!

KONG ROARS ... and SNATCHES at the NAVAL PLANES as they ZOOM by ... he FLINCHES as he is HIT BY BULLETS!

KONG clambers onto the SIDE of the BUILDING and begins climbing to the UPPER MOST LEVEL...attempting to DRAW the PLANES away from ANN ...

CLOSE ON: The MASKED FACE of a PILOT as he heads straight for KONG.

ANGLE ON: KONG swipes at the MOORING MAST and sends it crashing down to the streets below.

WIDER ON: KONG stands atop the BUILDING, ROARING & DRUMMING HIS CHEST in ANGER.

ANGLE ON: ANN as she desperately begins to climb up a SERVICE LADDER on the outside of the STEEL DOME ...

EXT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING/MANHATTAN - DAWN

ANGLE ON: KONG ROARS in pain as the bullets hit ... As the PLANES fly past he SNATCHES at them ...

CLOSE ON: A GUNNER ...

ANGLE ON: KONG recoils in pain as each bullet hits... HE ROARS IN PAIN.

ANGLE ON: KONG leaps into the AIR smashing at the last PLANE ... the GIANT APE falls through the AIR ...

The CRIPPLED PLANE spins out of control ... plummeting towards the street!

The PLANES continue their attack as KONG tries each time to SWAT at them.

INT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - DAWN

ANGLE ON: JACK RACES into a LIFT and hurriedly punches the BUTTON ... nothing happens ...

OLD SECURITY GUARD
Hey, hey, nobody past this point. You can’t go in there.

JACK pushes past the OLD SECURITY GUARD!

ANGLE ON: JACK races round a corner ... races into the SERVICE ELEVATOR ... the doors slowly close.

EXT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING/MANHATTAN - PRE DAWN

The continued assault ... POV: through the gunners sight as bullets attack KONG.

ANGLE ON: ANN continues to climb the ladder, SHE is nearing the top.

SUDDENLY a PLANE FLIES straight at KONG. He LEAPS out the way and FALLS...

KONG smashes into the SIDE of the BUILDING ... one hand still grasping onto the UPPER LEVEL ... the TOP of ANN'S LADDER gives way ...

HIGH ANGLE ON: ANN dangling precariously in mid-air as she desperately tries to hold on to the STEEL RUNGS ... her fingers slip ... ANN FALLS!

KONG stretches out and catches ANN in his HUGE PAW ... behind him the planes are circling preparing to dive once again ...

KONG reaches through the BROKEN WINDOWS and puts ANN in the GLASS-IN UPPER-OBSERVATION DECK ... ANN tumbles to the GROUND.

Before she can stand another BURST of GUNFIRE rakes the BUILDING! WINDOWS SHATTER! GLASS FLIES all around ANN. BULLETS SLAM into the BACK of KONG!

KONG circles the building trying to get away from the PLANE but it continues to follow him.

ANGLE ON: KONG leaping back on to the top of the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING ... He grabs the PLANE'S WING, spinning it around and around ...

ANGLE ON: The PLANE CRASHING in to one of the OTHER PLANES ... both PLANES plummet to the ground.

INT. OBSERVATION DECK, EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - DAWN

ANGLE ON:ANN staggers to her FEET and races outside to the balcony, desperately looking for KONG.

KONG looks FEARFUL ... he is WEAKENING from his BULLET WOUNDS.

ANGLE ON: ANN climbs the SMALL STAIRWAY which leads to the STEEL DOME ...

EXT. UPPER-LEVEL, EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - DAWN

KONG, clearly weakened, looks out across the city to the approaching PLANES.

THE PLANES are CIRCLING in the DISTANCE, preparing for an ATTACK RUN.

INT. ELEVATOR, EMPIRE STATE BUILDING

CLOSE ON: JACK watches the LIFT FLOOR INDICATOR as it slowly rises.

EXT. UPPER-LEVEL, EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - DAWN

ANGLE ON: A LONE PLANE as it NEARS it’s TARGET.

CLOSE ON: THE PILOTS FACE...

CLOSE ON: KONG musters all his remaining strength and in one last challenge, rises up ROARING at the APPROACHING PLANE...

ANN races between KONG’S LEGS to the EDGE of the BUILDING ... she frantically waves at the PLANES, screaming as loud as she can!

ANN
No! No!

CLOSE ON: THE PILOT ... seeing ANN, he decides not to fire.

ANGLE ON: KONG, now barely clinging to the top of the building, gently picks up ANN and STARES AT HER ONE LAST TIME. HE places her GENTLY down on the ground ...

WIDE ON: THE PLANES as they fly at KONG.

GUNFIRE SMASHES into KONG. ANN looks up ... KONG grasps the side of the BUILDING ... She crawls over to him, clutches his FINGERS, hugging them, trying to COMFORT HIM. TEARS STREAM DOWN HER FACE ... KONG slowly lifts her in his HAND ... he looks beyond her ...

ALL SOUND FADES AWAY ... except for a gentle breeze ...

The FEAR leaves KONG ... he looks at ANN with TENDERNESS and LOVE.

CLOSE ON: KONG ... as the light in his eyes slowly fades and goes out.

KONG topples back ... disappearing from sight.

WIDE ON: KONG plummeting away ... Towards the ground FAR BELOW.

ANGLE ON: ANN as she moves towards the edge of the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING ... she stares down at the STREETS BELOW ... overcome by a sense of utter despair ...

CLOSE ON: ANN ... for a brief moment she wants to do nothing more than follow KONG ...

ANGLE ON: JACK as he climbs on to the ROOF ... he looks at ANN.

SLOWLY ANN turns and faces him ... her grief still trapped inside her ... JACK can see in her eyes how close he is to losing her.

ANN stares at him a beat ... tears begin to spill from her eyes. Slowly she rises to her feet and walks hesitantly towards Jack.

JACK gently embraces her. She wraps her arms around him.

WIDE SHOT: JACK and ANN holding each other as dawn light washes over them.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - MORNING

CROWDS are gathering to STARE at KONG’S BODY. A SWARM of JOURNALISTS converge on KONG ... light-bulbs flashing ...

ANGLE ON: TWO PHOTOGRAPHERS climb onto KONG’S CHEST ... CAMERAS AIMED right at KONG’S FACE ... they jostle for position.

A POLICEMAN drags them off ...

POLICEMAN
Come on, boys, move on! Show’s over! Stay back! Behind the line!

As the NATIONAL GUARD begin holding the CROWD of ONLOOKERS BACK.

SOLDIERS pose for PHOTOS.

CLOSE ON: PHOTOGRAPHER 1 staring up the long length of the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING ... the distance that KONG has plummeted.

PHOTOGRAPHER 1
Why’d he do that? Climb up there and get himself cornered? The ape musta known what was comin’.

PHOTOGRAPHER 2
It’s just a dumb animal - it didn’t know nuthin’!

ANGLE ON: DENHAM pushing through the CROWD. He stares at KONG, DREAD, REALIZATION dawning on his face.

PHOTOGRAPHER 2 (cont'd)
What does it matter? The airplanes got him.

PUSH IN ... on DENHAM staring at KONG, an ASHEN expression on his face.

DENHAM
It wasn’t the airplanes ...

The PHOTOGRAPHERS stare at DENHAM ... expectant.

DENHAM (cont’d)
... it was beauty killed the beast.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM turns and slowly walks away from CAMERA.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END